



Christian Zi☆nism

And the Road Map to
Armageddon

Stephen Sizer

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Chapter 1: Introduction

‘As the navel is set in the centre of the human body,
so is the land of Israel the navel of the world ...
situated in the centre of the world,
and Jerusalem in the centre of the land of Israel,
and the sanctuary in the centre of Jerusalem,
and the holy place in the centre of the sanctuary,
and the ark in the centre of the holy place,
and the foundation stone before the holy place,
because from it the world was founded.’¹

This quotation from the Talmud, called the Midrash Tanchuma, epitomises the deep resonance many Jewish people have felt for the land of Israel, the city of Jerusalem and the Temple from their exile in AD 70 to the present day. It also explains, in part, the motivation behind the Zionist movement as well as the reason for the continuing Arab-Israeli conflict.

In this critical investigation of evangelical Christian Zionism from 1800 in Britain and America, this introduction will give an overview of the thesis; define Zionism and Christian Zionism; appraise the significance of Christian Zionism as a movement; assess the present state of research; explain the research aims and methodology; note the author’s contribution so far and summarise the intended outcomes.

1. An Overview of the Thesis

This thesis will examine Christian Zionism in three chapters dealing with the history, theology and politics of the movement. Chapter 2 will trace the historical development of Christian Zionism since 1800 and its transition from British sectarianism to mainstream American Evangelicalism. Chapter 3 will assess seven basic theological tenets that distinguish the various strands within the Christian Zionist movement: an ultra-literal and futurist² hermeneutic; a belief that the Jews remain God’s chosen people;

¹ Midrash Tanchuma, Qedoshim. Cited on <http://www.templemount.org>

² ‘Futurism’ is the method of interpretation in which the events recorded in prophetic Scripture, especially the Book of Revelation, are understood to describe future events at the end of history just prior to the return of Christ. This is in contrast to a preterist position which regards these same events as having been fulfilled in the Early Church. See Robert G. Clouse, ed., The Meaning of the Millennium, (Downers Grove, Illinois, IVP, 1977) and C. Marvin Pate, ed., Four Views of the Book of Revelation, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1998).

Restorationism and the return of the Jews to Palestine; the justification of Eretz Israel; the centrality of Jerusalem as the Jewish capital; the expectation that the Temple will be rebuilt; and a pessimistic premillennial apocalyptic eschatology. Chapter 4 will focus on the political consequences of this theology and the way in which Christian Zionists bolster the pro-Israeli lobby; facilitate aliyah; sustain the West Bank settlements; lobby for international recognition for Jerusalem; promote the rebuilding of the Temple; and oppose a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In the concluding chapter the variant forms of Christian Zionism will be delineated.

2. Zionism Defined

Zionism emerged as a political movement from within the liberal-humanist tradition of central and eastern Europe following the Napoleonic Wars and was a direct response to anti-Semitism.³ It differed, however, from other contemporary nationalist movements in so far as the Jews were landless. Walter Laqueur observes:

‘It became a psychological necessity for central European intellectuals, who realised that the emancipation of the Jews had triggered off a powerful reaction and who found the road to full emancipation barred by strong hostile forces.’⁴

The term ‘Zionism’ was coined in 1892 by Nathan Birnbaum, while a student in Vienna.⁵ In 1882 he had produced his first pamphlet opposing the idea of Jewish assimilation and in 1883 helped to found ‘Kadimah’, the first Jewish nationalist fraternity of students in Vienna. In 1885 he began to publish Selbst-Emancipation, a journal dedicated to achieving Jewish emancipation. In the 1880’s another Jewish philanthropic organisation called Chovevei Zion was founded in Eastern Europe to promote a safe haven in Palestine for destitute and persecuted Jews.⁶ In 1893 Birnbaum published a booklet

³ Walter Laqueur, A History of Zionism, (London, Weidenfeld Nicolson, 1972), p589.

⁴ Ibid., p590.

⁵ Ibid., pxiii.

⁶ Immanuel Jakobovits, The Attitude to Zionism of Britain’s Chief Rabbi’s as Reflected in their Writings, (London, The Jewish Historical Society of England, 1981), p2. Another international organisation called Mizrahi (from the Hebrew Merkaz Ruhani or ‘Spiritual Centre’) existed since 1902. Its sacred duty was to ensure the building of Eretz Yisrael as the National Home of the Jewish People on the basis of Traditional Judaism. <http://www.mucjs.org/EXHIBITION/9otherformszion.html>

entitled, Die Nationale Wiedergeburt des Jüdischen Volkes in seinem Lande als Mittel zur Lösung der Judenfrage meaning, 'The National Rebirth of the Jewish People in Its Homeland as a Means of Solving the Jewish Problem', in which he advocated more nationalistic ideas which Theodor Herzl was to later expound in Der Judenstaat, published in 1896.⁷

Herzl and Birnbaum articulated the deep longings of many Jewish people for their own homeland at the First Zionist Congress which Herzl convened in Basle a year later in 1897. They were not without critics within the wider Jewish community. In 1898, Joseph Prag, president of Chovevei Zion, for example, opposed Herzl's 'catastrophic'⁸ Political Zionism on the grounds that it 'advocated immigration on a vast scale before any provision had been made for the people.'⁹ This exposed the existence of two distinct forms of Zionism - political and practical, more especially visible after the failure of the East Africa experiment. The secular and nationalist 'political' Zionism of Herzl and Weizmann was opposed by the religious and philanthropic 'practical' Zionism of Mizrahi (1902) and Ahad Ha'am who favoured a more gradual assimilation of Jews in Palestine where the rights of the indigenous Arabs would be respected.¹⁰ The former sought national revival, while the latter national redemption, exposing the internal dualism if not inherent contradiction within Zionism, 'simultaneously a movement of national liberation and one of colonization.'¹¹

Nathan Weinstock emphasises: 'It is ... important to understand that Jewish nationalism, in particular its Zionist variant, was an absolutely new conception born of the socio-political context of Europe in the 19th Century.'¹² The emergence of Zionism in the 1880s and 1890s was, he claims, a 'reflex' nationalism, a defensive reaction to the anti-Semitism prevalent in Eastern Europe. In contrast, Jews in Western Europe, North America and the Arab

⁷ 'Nathan Birnbaum' Jewish Virtual Library, The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. <http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/biography/Birnbaum.html>; Theodor Herzl, A Jewish State, (London, David Nutt, 1896).

⁸ Anita Shapira in Essential Papers on Zionism, edited by Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira (New York, New York University Press, 1996), p14.

⁹ Jakobovits, op.cit.

¹⁰ Ralph Schoenman, The Hidden History of Zionism, (Santa Barbara, California, Veritas Press, 1988), pp8-13;

¹¹ Shapira, op.cit., pp14-15.

¹² Nathan Weinstock, Zionism, False Messiah, (London, Inter Links, 1979), p32.

World were initially 'quite unconnected with it.'¹³ Wagner summarises the dichotomy between the practical and political forms of Zionism: 'The latter followed the Germanic ethnocentric model of nationalism while the other was orientated toward the French and American versions.'¹⁴ This Germanic or Romantic form of nationalism which came to dominate Zionism in the 20th Century, Wagner claims, following Finkelstein, 'organizes its society and state along "blood" lines, and hence is a form of ethnic exclusivity.'¹⁵

The rise of Socialism and Communism led to the emergence of a further strand of Zionism in the form of the Labour Zionist Movement and organisations such as Poale Zion (Workers of Zion) in 1903, Ahdut Ha'avoda (the Jewish Workers Party) in 1919 and Hashomer Hatzair (The Young Watchman) in 1913. Jacob Katz claims these marked the transition of the centre of the Zionist movement from London to Jerusalem. 'Zionism produced an entire range of social expressions, from readers circles and political groups to the close communal life of the kvutza... an expression of the idea of a socialist utopia.'¹⁶

Writers such as David Vital,¹⁷ Howard Sachar¹⁸ and Michael Prior¹⁹ have traced the expansion and diversification of Zionism in the 20th Century into what Prior defines as a 'polyvalent discourse'²⁰ and Mintz describes as a 'richly polysemous concept open to multiple significations.'²¹ He points out how,

'The nature of Zionism before WW1 differs from that during the interwar years, from Zionism during the Shoah, and in the early post-

¹³ Ibid., p32.

¹⁴ Donald Wagner, Dying in the Land of Promise, (London, Melisende, 2001), p89.

¹⁵ Donald Wagner, unpublished notes. See also Norman Finkelstein, Image and Reality in the Israeli-Palestine Conflict, (New York, Verso, 1995).

¹⁶ Jacob Katz, 'The Forerunners of Zionism,' in Reinharz and Shapira, op.cit., p36.

¹⁷ David Vital, The Origins of Zionism, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1975); Zionism, The Formative Years, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1982); Zionism, The Crucial Phase, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987);

¹⁸ Howard M Sachar, A History of Israel from the Rise of Zionism to our Time, 2nd edition (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1998).

¹⁹ Michael Prior, Zionism and the State of Israel, A Moral Inquiry, (London, Routledge, 1999). Prior traces five historical phases of Zionism: The early phase (1896-1917); the second phase (1917-48); the third phase (the State of Israel 1948-67); the fourth phase (1967-1993); and the fifth phase (1993-).

²⁰ Ibid., p67.

²¹ Matityahu Mintz "'Work for the Land of Israel" and "Work in the Present" A Concept of Unity, A Reality of Contradiction.' in Reinharz and Shapira, op.cit., p170.

war pre-State period. A fortiori, it also is different from the more recent brand of Zionism that has thrived throughout the Jewish world since the 1950s.²²

The diverse spectrum within the Zionist movement is reflected in the make-up of the Israeli Knesset. Sachar points out that,

In no Knesset since the establishment of the State were fewer than ten parties represented and in none did a single party ever have a majority ... After 1948 Israeli citizens were not selecting a government so much as authorizing an intricate obstacle course of coalition bargaining.²³

Sachar notes that in 1948, 21 different parties submitted lists of candidates for the first Knesset. In 1951 there were 17; in 1955, 18; and in the 4th Knesset in 1959 there were 26 parties. This diversity reflects the fact that Zionism was nurtured in the Diasporas of Russia, Eastern and Western Europe, North and Latin America as well as the Middle East. The high number of Israeli political parties therefore merely reflected the 'non-indigenisation' of Zionism.²⁴ In 2003, the Jewish Virtual Library lists 41 different political parties, of which 16 ran for the 15th Knesset and 12 actually won seats.²⁵

The most recent form of Zionism to emerge, and probably the most destructive, is Messianic Zionism associated with individuals like Rabbi Kook the Elder, the Younger and Rabbi Kahne, the Gush Emunim movement, and Gershon Salomon and the Temple Mount Faithful. Sachar describes how Religious Zionism was spawned from within the ultra-Orthodox subcultures of the 'Charedi Bible-belt' around Jerusalem following the 1967 Six Day War. The Charedim were, he shows, 'the first to embrace the territorialist mysticism inherent in the 1967 triumph' and also subsequently a decisive factor in Likud's electoral victory in 1997.²⁶ Equating Arabs with the ancient Amaleks and, convinced they have a divinely ordained mandate to destroy the Palestinians, religious Zionists have been in the forefront of the confiscation

²² Ibid.

²³ Sachar op.cit., p1014.

²⁴ Ibid., p363.

²⁵ Israel News Online <http://members.aol.com/IsraelHr/miflagot.html> See also <http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/Politics/partytoc.html>

²⁶ Sachar op.cit., p923.

of Palestinian land, attacks on Muslims and Mosques²⁷ and the systematic expansion of the West Bank settlements, especially in places like Hebron.²⁸

While conceding that Zionism is not a 'unitary entity',²⁹ it has nevertheless been defined in general terms as 'the national movement for the return of the Jewish people to their homeland and the resumption of Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel.'³⁰ At the 27th Zionist Congress held in Jerusalem in 1968, this definition was amplified to include five broad principles:

'1. The unity of the Jewish people and the centrality of Israel in Jewish life; 2. The in-gathering of the Jewish people in its historic homeland, Eretz Israel; 3. The strengthening of the State of Israel; 4. The preservation of the identity of the Jewish people; and 5. The protection of Jewish rights.'³¹

Following the Israeli capture of East Jerusalem and their occupation of the West Bank and Golan after the Six Day War in 1967, the wider international community increasingly rejected the notion that Zionism was simply another national liberation movement. The growing criticism of the Zionist agenda is reflected, for example, in UN Security Council Resolutions 224 and 338. Indeed, in 1975, the UN General Assembly resolution 3379 declared Zionism to be, 'a form of racism and racial discrimination.'³² While this was subsequently revoked under pressure from the USA, in 2001 the UN World

²⁷ Dr Baruch Goldstein who murdered 29 worshippers in the Hebron Mosque in 1994 is venerated as a martyr within the religious settler movement as is Yigal Amir, the son of an Orthodox rabbi who assassinated Yitzak Rabin. See Prior, op.cit., pp.67-69.

²⁸ Sachar cites Rabbi Israel Hess, formerly campus rabbi of Bar Ilan University, as insisting, 'The day will yet come when we will be called to fulfil the commandment of the divinely ordained war to destroy Amalek.' Ibid., p927.

²⁹ Mintz, op.cit., p169.

³⁰ 'A Definition of Zionism' The Jewish Virtual Library, The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. <http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/Zionism/zionism.html> For a comprehensive appraisal of Jewish Zionism see also John Haynes Holmes, Palestine Today and Tomorrow: A Gentile's Survey of Zionism, (New York, Macmillan, 1929); Laqueur, op.cit.; Gary Smith, Zionism, The Dream and the Reality - A Jewish Critique, (Newton Abbot, David & Charles, 1974); Weinstock, op.cit.; Jakobovits, op.cit.; Roger Garaudy, The Case of Israel, A Study of Political Zionism, (London, Shorouk International, 1983); Bernard Avishai, The Tragedy of Zionism, Revolution and Democracy in the Land of Israel, (New York, Farrar Straus Giroux, 1985); Claude Duvernoy, The Zionism of God, (Jerusalem, Ahva Press, 1985); Schoenman op.cit.; Reinharz and Shapira, op.cit.;

³¹ Sharif, op.cit., p7; see also Uri Davis, The State of Palestine, (Reading, Ithaca, 1991), p28.

³² Sharif, op.cit., p1,120. Laqueur, op.cit., pxvi.

Conference on Racism held in Durban, South Africa, adopted the following declaration concerning Palestinian rights without actually naming Israel:

‘For the purpose of the present Declaration and Programme of Action, the victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance are individuals or groups of individuals who are or have been negatively affected by, subjected to, or targets of these scourges ... We are concerned about the plight of the Palestinian people under foreign occupation. We recognize the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self determination and to the establishment of an independent State ... We recognize the right of refugees to return voluntary to their homes and properties in dignity and safety, and urge all States to facilitate such return.’³³

Ironically, the Zionist vision which initially simply called for a ‘publicly secured and legally assured homeland for the Jews in Palestine,’³⁴ was largely nurtured and shaped by Christian Zionists long before it was able to inspire widespread Jewish support.³⁵ As will be shown in the next chapter proto-Christian Zionism predated and nurtured Jewish Zionism, while the contemporary Christian Zionist movement only emerged after 1967 in part as a reaction to the widespread criticism which Israel has endured over the last thirty-five years.

3. Christian Zionism Defined

The term ‘Christian Zionist’ first appears to have been used by Theodor Herzl to describe Henri Dunant, the Swiss philanthropist and founder of the Red Cross. Dunant was one of only a handful of Gentiles to be invited to the First Zionist Congress. At its simplest, Christian Zionism is a political form of philo-Semitism, and can be defined as ‘Christian support for Zionism.’³⁶ Walter Riggans interprets the term in an overtly political sense as, ‘any Christian who supports the Zionist aim of the sovereign State of Israel, its army,

³³ The United Nations. World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance Declaration adopted 8 September (2001), Sections 1, 62 & 64.

³⁴ Cited in Regina Sharif, Non-Jewish Zionism, Its Roots in Western History, (London, Zed, 1983), p1.

³⁵ This argument is developed in Chapter 2 on the History of Christian Zionism.

³⁶ Colin Chapman, Whose Promised Land, Israel or Palestine?, revised edition (Oxford, Lion, 2002), p274.

government, education etc., but it can describe a Christian who claims to support the State of Israel for any reason.³⁷

Louis Hamada traces what he sees as the correlation between secular Jewish Zionism and Christian Zionism:

‘The term Zionism refers to a political Jewish movement for the establishment of a national homeland in Palestine for the Jews that have been dispersed. On the other hand, a Christian Zionist is a person who is more interested in helping God fulfill His prophetic plan through the physical and political Israel, rather than helping Him fulfill His evangelistic plan through the Body of Christ.’³⁸

While Hamada is correct to observe that Christian Zionists essentially support what was predominantly a secular and political movement, increasingly Christian Zionists are now identifying with the religious elements which dominate the Zionist agenda, especially among the settlers and Temple Mount movement. Furthermore, Christian Zionism is considerably more complex than Hamada suggests, with some leading agencies committed to both a ‘prophetic plan’ as well as an ‘evangelistic plan’ for the Jewish people, notably Jews for Jesus and the Churches Ministry Among Jewish People (CMJ). Evangelicals, in particular, are increasingly polarised as to whether Christian Zionism is biblical and orthodox or heretical and cultic. Colin Chapman observes, ‘It is hard to think of another situation anywhere in the world where politics have come to be so closely bound up with religion, and where scriptures have such a profound effect on political action.’³⁹

Riggans, for example, elaborates on the relationship between theology and politics in Zionism:

‘A Biblical Zionism, which is surely the desire of every Christian, will be fundamentally about God and His purposes. Thus Zionism, when seen in a proper Christian perspective, will be understood as a branch of theology, not of politics ... The State of Israel is only the beginning of what God is doing for and through the Jewish people.’⁴⁰

He goes on to suggest that Christians should not only support the idea of a Jewish State, but also support its policies. ‘... in the most modest of ways I

³⁷ Walter Riggans, Israel and Zionism, (London, Handsell, 1988), p19.

³⁸ Louis Bahjat Hamada, Understanding the Arab World, (Nashville, Nelson, 1990), p189.

³⁹ Chapman, op.cit., p304.

would suggest that Christians ... must give support in principle to the State of Israel as a sign of God's mercy and faithfulness, and as a biblical mark that God is very much at work in the world.'⁴¹

While not specifying the geographical extent of Zion, the Israel Branch of the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism, which draws together most evangelical and charismatic denominations, as well as messianic and evangelical mission agencies, made the following commitment in 1989:

'We affirm our belief that, as part of the fulfillment of God's promises in the Bible, the Jewish people have a right to the land of Israel. We further affirm the legitimacy of the Jewish national political entity in the land within safe and secure borders.'⁴²

The International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem, defines Biblical Zionism as 'Cutting edge theology for "the Last Days."'

'Biblical Zionism is Scripture's golden thread of truth to bring blessings to all nations of the earth ... is the endeavour to be involved with that which God is doing in the world to bring all mankind into a restored relationship to Himself ... Biblical Zionism recognizes the role that God has given Israel (Isaiah 60:1-3) and promotes the belief that to stand as a servant intercessor for the fulfilment of God's destiny for Israel is to bring blessing to all other nations on earth, as "the Gentiles come to your light." (Isaiah 60:3) ... For the Biblical Zionist, the restoration of the nation of Israel in its ancient spoil is evidence of the redemption promised for the whole world ... To support Israel (Genesis 12:3, Romans 15:27), to comfort Israel (Isaiah 40:1-2), and to pray for her peace (Psalms 122:6; Isaiah 62:6-7) is to work in harmony with God.'⁴³

Advocates argue therefore that Christian Zionism is born out of the conviction that God has a continuing special relationship with, and covenantal purpose for, the Jewish people, apart from the Church, and that the Jewish people have a divine right to possess the land of Palestine. This is based on a literal and futurist interpretation of the Bible and the conviction that Old Testament prophecies concerning the Jewish people are being fulfilled in the contemporary State of Israel. For Christian Zionists, God's promise to Abraham remains unconditional and eternal.

⁴⁰ Walter Riggans, The Covenant with the Jews, (Tunbridge Wells, Monarch, 1992), pp91, 93.

⁴¹ Walter Riggans, Israel and Zionism, (London, Handsell Press, 1988), p21.

⁴² Baruch Maoz, 'A Statement on Christian Zionism', Mishkan, 1, 12 (1990), p6.

⁴³ International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem, 'Biblical Zionism, Cutting Edge

‘To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates ... The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.’ (Genesis 15:18; 17:8).⁴⁴

Invariably Christian Zionists are therefore also defenders of, and apologists for, the State of Israel. This support consistently involves opposing those deemed to be critical of, or hostile toward Israel, but also leads to the justification of Israel’s occupation and settlement of the West Bank, Golan and Gaza on biblical grounds. As tensions simmer in the Middle East, so the stakes are raised to gain the moral high ground, and the Bible is used both to silence Israel’s critics as well as to castigate Israel. In such a polarised culture, anti-Zionism is equated with anti-Semitism while some Zionists as well as non-Zionist Jewish academics concede that the Shoah has been exploited by what they describe as ‘holocaustology’ to immunize Israel from censure.⁴⁵

Criticism of Christian Zionism has come principally from evangelicals,⁴⁶ Roman Catholics,⁴⁷ as well as the liberal establishment such as the World Council of Churches.⁴⁸ Grace Halsell, for example, asks: ‘What is the message of the Christian Zionist? Simply stated it is this: every act taken by Israel is orchestrated by God, and should be condoned, supported, and even praised by the rest of us.’⁴⁹ This leads Dale Crowley, a Washington based

Theology for “the Last Days”’, Word from Jerusalem, September (2001), p9.

⁴⁴ Rob Richards, Has God Finished with Israel? (Crowborough, Monarch, 1994), p177.

⁴⁵ Ruth Rosen, ‘Holocaustology, Past Oppression, Present Excuse?’ Issues, 13:5 (2000); Norman G. Finkelstein, The Holocaust Industry, Reflections of the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering, (London, Verso, 2000); Sam Schulman, ‘Did Six Million Die for This?’ Jewish World Review, January (2000).

⁴⁶ Chapman, op.cit.; Donald Wagner, Anxious for Armageddon, (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, Herald Press, 1995); Dying in the Land of Promise, (London, Melisende, 2001); Gary Burge, Who are God’s People in the Middle East? (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1993); Kenneth Cragg, Palestine, the Prize and Price of Zion, (London, Cassell, 1997).

⁴⁷ Michael Prior, The Bible and Colonialism, A Moral Critique, (Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); Zionism and the State of Israel, A Moral Inquiry, (London, Routledge, 1999).

⁴⁸ The Middle East Council of Churches, What is Western Fundamentalist Christian Zionism? (Limassol, Cyprus, MECC, 1988).

⁴⁹ Grace Halsell, ‘Israeli Extremists and Christian Fundamentalists: The Alliance’, Washington Report, December (1988), p31.

religious broadcaster, to describe dispensational Christian Zionism as a cult, indeed, the 'fastest growing cult in America':

'It's not composed of "crazies" so much as mainstream, middle to upper-middle class Americans. They give millions of dollars each week – to the TV evangelists who expound the fundamentals of the cult. They read Hal Lindsey and Tim LaHaye. They have one goal: to facilitate God's hand to waft them up to heaven free from all the trouble, from where they will watch Armageddon and the destruction of planet earth.'⁵⁰

The Middle East Council of Churches similarly reject Christian Zionism, 'as representing a heretical interpretation of Holy Scripture',⁵¹ while John Stott describes it as 'biblical anathema.'⁵²

Whether consciously or otherwise, Christian Zionists subscribe to a religious Jewish agenda best expressed by Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, who claims: 'We should not forget ... that the supreme purpose of the ingathering of exiles and the establishment of our State is the building of the Temple. The Temple is at the very top of the pyramid.'⁵³ Another rabbi, Yisrael Meida, explains the link between politics and theology within Jewish Zionism: 'It is all a matter of sovereignty. He who controls the Temple Mount, controls Jerusalem. And he who controls Jerusalem, controls the land of Israel.'⁵⁴ This paradigm may be illustrated by way of three concentric rings. The land represents the outer ring, Jerusalem the middle ring and the Temple is the centre ring. The three rings comprise the Zionist agenda by which the Land was claimed in 1948, the Old City of Jerusalem was occupied in 1967 and the Temple site is being contested. For the religious Zionist, Jewish or Christian, the three are inextricably linked. The Christian Zionist vision therefore is to work to see all three under exclusive Jewish control since this will lead to

⁵⁰ Dale Crowley, 'Errors and Deceptions of Dispensational Teachings.' Capital Hill Voice, (1996-1997), cited in Halsell, op.cit., p5. Grace Halsell herself defines Christian Zionism as a cult. See Halsell, op.cit., p31.

⁵¹ MECC, What, op.cit., preface; See also Peter Makari, 'Abrahamic Heritage' MECC News Report, 10:2/3 Summer (1998).

⁵² John Stott, cited in Don Wagner, Anxious for Armageddon, (Scottsdale, Herald Press, 1995), p80.

⁵³ Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Hachohen Aviner, cited in Grace Halsell, Forcing God's Hand, (Washington, Crossroads International, 1999), p71.

⁵⁴ Yisrael Meida, cited in Halsell, Forcing, op.cit., p68.

blessing for the entire world as nations recognise and respond to what God is seen to be doing in and through Israel.⁵⁵

4. The Significance of the Christian Zionist Movement

Christian Zionism as a movement is very diverse, ranging from individual Christian leaders whose denominations have no stated position on Zionism,⁵⁶ to major international evangelical organizations which are unapologetically Zionist. Some have an explicit political agenda, such as Bridges for Peace and the International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem, which also enjoys diplomatic status in several Central American countries.⁵⁷ Both have disavowed or redefined evangelism and identify with right-wing Israeli opinion, lobbying the US government to continue to finance Israel's expansionist agenda. Other organisations such as Jews for Jesus and CMJ are primarily evangelistic or messianic but also espouse Zionism on biblical grounds. Exobus and the Ebenezer Trust, for example, are representative of smaller organisations specializing in facilitating the transportation of Jews to Israel from Russia and Eastern Europe, while Christian Friends of Israel Communities encourage churches to adopt Jewish settlements in the Occupied Territories.⁵⁸

Contemporary British Christian Zionist leaders include Derek Prince,⁵⁹ David Pawson,⁶⁰ Lance Lambert⁶¹ and Walter Riggans.⁶² Along with

⁵⁵ 'Biblical Zionism, Cutting Edge Theology for the "Last Days"' Word from Jerusalem, International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem, September (2001), p9.

⁵⁶ For example, David Pawson, When Jesus Returns, (London, Hodder, 1998); 'Israel in the New Testament' Israel & Christians Today, Summer (2002), p5; John MacArthur, The Future of Israel, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1991); R.T. Kendall, 'How literally do you read your Bible?' Israel & Christians Today, Summer (2001), p9.

⁵⁷ ICEJ have diplomatic status in Honduras and Guatemala and have been implicated in facilitating the funding of the US-backed Contras during the 1980s. Donald Wagner, Anxious for Armageddon, (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, Herald, 1995), p109.

⁵⁸ Sarah Honig, 'Adopt-a-Settlement Program', The Jerusalem Post, 2nd October (1995); <http://www.bridgesforpeace.com/publications/dispatch/lifeinIsrael/Article-12.html>

⁵⁹ Derek Prince, The Last Word on the Middle East, (Fort Lauderdale, Derek Prince Ministries International, 1982); The Destiny of Israel and the Church, (Milton Keynes, Word, 1992).

⁶⁰ David Pawson, Jerusalem-The Next 1,000 Years, audio tape DP.1115, (Ashford, Anchor Recordings, n.d.). Along with Binyamin Netanyahu, David Pawson is a guest speaker at the 2002 Feast of Tabernacles celebration in Israel organised by the International Christian Zionist Center. <http://www.iczc.org.il>

Americans such as Jerry Falwell,⁶³ Pat Robertson,⁶⁴ Hal Lindsey,⁶⁵ Mike Evans,⁶⁶ Charles Dyer,⁶⁷ John Walvoord⁶⁸ and Dave Hunt,⁶⁹ they have achieved considerable influence in popularising an apocalyptic premillennial and largely dispensational eschatology legitimising Zionism among Western Christians. That their teaching also warrants the description 'Armageddon Theology'⁷⁰ is evident from the provocative titles of many of their recent books.⁷¹ The beliefs and practices of the most influential of these organisations and individuals will be examined in later chapters.

⁶¹ Lance Lambert, The Battle for Israel, (Eastbourne, Kingsway, 1975); The Uniqueness of Israel, (Eastbourne, Kingsway, 1980).

⁶² Walter Riggans, Israel and Zionism, (London, Handsell, 1988); The Covenant with the Jews: What's So Unique About the Jewish People? (Tunbridge Wells, Monarch, 1992).

⁶³ Jerry Falwell, Listen, America, (New York, Doubleday, 1980); The Fundamentalist Phenomenon, (New York, Doubleday, 1981); Merrill Simon, Jerry Falwell and the Jews, (Middle Village, New York, Jonathan David, 1984).

⁶⁴ Pat Robertson, The New Millennium, 10 Trends That Will Impact You and Your Family By The Year 2000, (Dallas, Word, 1990); The Secret Kingdom: Your Path to Peace, Love and Financial Security, revised edition (Dallas, Word, 1992).

⁶⁵ Hal Lindsey, The Late Great Planet Earth, (London, Lakeland, 1970); The 1980's Countdown to Armageddon, (New York, Bantam, 1981); Israel and the Last Days, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House Publishers, 1983); The Road to Holocaust, (New York, Bantam, 1989); Planet Earth 2000 AD Will Mankind Survive? (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1994); The Final Battle, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1995).

⁶⁶ Mike Evans, Israel, America's Key to Survival, (Plainfield, New Jersey, Haven, n.d.); The Return, (Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 1986); Jerusalem Betrayed, (Dallas, Word, 1997).

⁶⁷ Charles Dyer, The Rise of Babylon, Signs of the End Times, (Wheaton, Illinois, Tyndale House, 1991); World News and Biblical Prophecy, (Wheaton, Illinois, Tyndale House, 1993).

⁶⁸ John Walvoord, Israel in Prophecy, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1962); The Nations in Prophecy, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1967); The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1975); The Rapture Question, revised edition (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1979); The Nations, Israel and the Church in Prophecy, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1988); Armageddon, Oil and the Middle East Crisis (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1990); Major Bible Prophecies, (New York, Harper Collins, 1991).

⁶⁹ Dave Hunt, The Cup of Trembling: Jerusalem and Bible Prophecy, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1995).

⁷⁰ Donald Wagner, Anxious, op.cit.; See also Gary DeMar, Last Days Madness, Obsession of the Modern Church, (Atlanta, Georgia, American Vision, 1997); Richard Kyle, The Last Days are Here Again, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker, 1998).

⁷¹ Notably, Hal Lindsey, The 1980's Countdown to Armageddon, (New York, Bantam, 1981); The Road to Holocaust, (New York, Bantam 1989); The Final Battle, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1995); Edgar C. James, Arabs, Oil and Armageddon, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1977); Marius Baar, The Unholy War, Oil, Islam and Armageddon, (Worthing, Henry E. Walter, 1980); Mike Evans, Israel, America's Key to

Dispensational Christian Zionism, which is the dominant form of Christian Zionism in America, with its teaching on the Rapture of the Church, the rebuilding of the Temple and imminent battle of Armageddon, is pervasive within mainline evangelical, charismatic and independent denominations including the Assemblies of God, Pentecostal and Southern Baptists as well as many of the independent mega-churches. Crowley claims they are led by 80,000 fundamentalist pastors, their views disseminated by 1,000 Christian radio stations as well as 100 Christian TV stations.⁷² Doug Kreiger lists over 250 pro-Israeli organisations founded in the 1980s alone.⁷³

Estimates as to the size of the movement as a whole vary considerably. While critics like Crowley claim, 'At least one out of every 10 Americans is a devotee', advocates such as Robertson and Falwell claim the support of 100 million Americans with whom they communicate weekly.⁷⁴ Dale Crowley's own estimate is that there are between '25 to 30 million' pro-Israeli Christians in America, a number that is growing.⁷⁵ Robert Boston, for example, in his biography of Pat Robertson, argues that his Christian Coalition, with an annual budget of \$25 million and over 1.7 million members, is 'arguably ... the single most influential political organisation in the U.S.'⁷⁶ At the other end of the scale, the National Unity Coalition for Israel brings together 200 different Jewish and Christian Zionist organisations including the International Christian Embassy, Christian Friends of Israel and Bridges for Peace and claims a support base of 40 million active members.⁷⁷ These organisations, in varying degrees, and for a variety of reasons, some contradictory, make up a broad coalition which is shaping the Christian Zionist agenda today.

Survival, (Plainfield, New Jersey, Haven, n.d.); John F. Walvoord, Armageddon, Oil and the Middle East Crisis, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1990); The Final Drama, (Grand Rapids, Kregel, 1993); Moishe Rosen, Beyond the Gulf War, Overture to Armageddon, (San Bernardino, Here's Life Publishers, 1991); Dave Hunt, Peace, Prosperity and the Coming Holocaust, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1983).

⁷² Halsell, Forcing, op.cit., p50.

⁷³ Grace Halsell, Prophecy and Politics, (Westport, Connecticut, Lawrence Hill, 1986), p178.

⁷⁴ 'Christians Call for a United Jerusalem' New York Times, 18 April (1997), <http://www.cdn-friends-icej.ca/united.html>

⁷⁵ Halsell, Forcing, op.cit., p50.

⁷⁶ Robert Boston, The Most Dangerous Man in America? Pat Robertson and the Rise of the Christian Coalition, (New York, Prometheus, 1996).

5. The State of Research into Christian Zionism

It appears that the influence of evangelical Christians upon the development of Zionism has been consistently underestimated and is considerably more pervasive than has previously been recognised.⁷⁸

While Evangelicalism and Christian Fundamentalism, in particular, have attracted a considerable amount of attention in academic circles,⁷⁹ their influence upon the rise of Christian Zionism itself appears to have escaped serious consideration apart from a few notable exceptions.⁸⁰ Marsden concedes that: 'Even most of those neo-evangelicals who abandoned the details of Dispensationalism still retained a firm belief in Israel's God-ordained role. This belief is immensely popular in America, though rarely mentioned in

⁷⁷ <http://www.israelunitycoalition.com>

⁷⁸ Numerous Jewish authors ignore or minimise the influence of British Christians such as William Hechler or Americans such as William Blackstone on the development and acceptance of Zionism. For example there is no reference to either in David Vital's three volume history of Zionism, or in Laqueur, Weinstock or O'Brien. See David Vital, The Origins of Zionism, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1975); Zionism, the Formative Years, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1982); Zionism, the Crucial Phase, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987); Laqueur, op.cit.; Weinstock, op.cit.; Conor Cruise O'Brien, The Siege, the Saga of Israel and Zionism, (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1986).

⁷⁹ George M. Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism 1870-1925, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1980); Evangelicalism and Modern America, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1984); Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1991); Martin E. Marty & R. Scott Appleby, Fundamentalism Observed, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1991); Lionel Caplan, ed., Studies in Religious Fundamentalism, (Basingstoke, MacMillan, 1987).

⁸⁰ The principal writers who have critically appraised evangelical Christian Zionism are Hassan Haddad and Donald Wagner, All in the Name of the Bible, Selected Essays on Israel and American Christian Fundamentalism, (Brattleboro, Vermont, Amana, 1986); David A. Rausch, Zionism within early American Fundamentalism, 1878-1918; a convergence of two traditions, (New York, Mellen Press, 1979); Halsell, Prophecy, op.cit.; Middle East Council of Churches, What is Western Fundamentalist Christian Zionism?, revised edition (Limassol, Cyprus, MECC, 1988); Rosemary Radford Ruether & Herman J. Reuther, The Wrath of Jonah, (San Francisco, Harper, 1989); Wagner, Anxious, op.cit.; Michael Prior, Zionism and the State of Israel, a Moral Inquiry, (London, Routledge, 1999); Halsell, Forcing, op.cit.; Paul Merkley, Christian Attitudes towards the State of Israel, (Kingston, London, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001).

Writers sympathetic to Christian Zionism include Michael Pragai, Faith and Fulfillment, (London, Vallentine Mitchell, 1985); Kelvin Crombie, For the Love of Zion, (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1991); Claude Duvernoy, The Zionism of God, (Jerusalem, Ahva Press, 1985); Wendell Stearns, Biblical Zionism, (Hilversum, Holland, Moriah Foundation, 1994); and Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Israelology, the Missing Link in Systematic Theology, revised edition (Tustin, California, Ariel Ministries, 1992).

proportion to its influence.’⁸¹ From a British perspective, Margaret Brearley likewise acknowledges: ‘A detailed exposition of the biblical and theological basis for Christian Zionism is clearly needed.’⁸²

An exhaustive survey of published works confirms the relatively undeveloped nature of research into contemporary Christian Zionism. For example, while Regina Sharif traces the influence of the Reformation, Puritanism and Millennialism on the rise of Zionism, she nevertheless concentrates on the political dimension and developments prior to 1945, as do Paul Merkley and Barbara Tuchman.⁸³ Sharif argues:

‘The traditional terms “Gentile” or “Christian” Zionism are misleading since they now suggest a Christian enthusiasm for Zionism motivated essentially by Biblical or theological reasoning. But it is the political motivations of non-Jewish protagonists of Zionism which have above all today come to make up an integral part of the non-Jewish Zionist matrix ... It is precisely this unique phenomenon on non-Jewish Zionism that we propose to analyse here.’⁸⁴

As a secular historian, Sharif not surprisingly perhaps, minimizes the significance of ‘Biblical or theological reasoning’ upon the Christian Zionist movement. This thesis will address this deficiency and demonstrate that biblical reasoning has indeed been a major factor in the development of Christian Zionism.

6. Research Aims and Methodology

The thesis will assess the main historical, theological and political factors which have contributed to the development of Christian Zionism since 1800 in Britain and America. It will examine the way in which Christian Zionists justify their partisan support for the State of Israel, their antipathy for Palestinians and their adverse influence on the Middle East peace process. It will also seek to distinguish discrete types of Christian Zionism based on their

⁸¹ Marsden, Understanding, op.cit., p77.

⁸² Margaret Brearley, ‘Jerusalem for Christian Zionists’ in Jerusalem, Past and Present in the Purposes of God, edited by P.W.L. Walker, (Croydon, Deo Gloria, 1992), p120.

⁸³ Regina Sharif, Non-Jewish Zionism, its Roots in Western History, (London, Zed, 1983). Similarly, Paul Merkley, The Politics of Christian Zionism 1891-1948, (London, Frank Cass, 1998); and Barbara Tuchman, Bible and Sword, How the British came to Palestine, (New York, New York University, 1956).

⁸⁴ Ibid., p2.

approach to issues such as the relationship between Israel and the Church, evangelism, and the Temple. A literature analysis of primary historical and contemporary sources as well as interviews and unpublished correspondence will be used to identify the dominant historical, theological and political themes which both define as well as distinguish variant forms of contemporary Christian Zionism.

7. Contribution and Intended Outcome

This thesis was initiated following previous research into the ethical management of pilgrimages to the Holy Land which demonstrated the destructive nature of Christian Zionist tours, especially upon the Palestinian Christian community.⁸⁵ Published findings arising from this thesis⁸⁶ have

⁸⁵ Stephen Sizer, Visiting the Living Stones, Pilgrimages to the Un-Holy Land. Unpublished thesis submitted in part-fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of M.Th. in Applied Theology, University of Oxford, (1994).

⁸⁶ Stephen Sizer, 'A word after a word after a word is power: With Semantics and Scripture, Zionists have crafted a peculiar and powerful labyrinth of belief', Living Stones, 11, (1994), pp5-6; 'The Mountain of the Wall, The Battle for Jerusalem', Evangelicals Now, May (1997), p9; 'Pilgrimages and Politics, A Survey of British Holy Land Tour Operators', Living Stones, 14, (1997), pp14-17; 'The hidden face of Holy Land pilgrimage tourism', International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 9, 1 (1997), pp34-35; "'Render to Caesar" The Politics of Pilgrimage Tourism to the Holy Land', International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 10, 1 (1998), pp39-41; 'Building Site Shatters Peace: Stephen Sizer explains the background to Robin Cook's visit to the disputed fields of Har Homa', The Church Times, 20 March (1998), p2; 'Christian Zionism: True Friends of Israel?' Living Stones, 16, (1998), pp18-24; 'Christian Zionism: A British Perspective', Al Aqsa Journal, 1, (1998), pp19-24; 'Christian Zionism: A British Perspective' published in Holy Land - Hollow Jubilee, edited by Naim Ateek & Michael Prior (London, Melisende, 1999) pp144-161; 'Ethics in Tourism', International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, edited by Stephen Sizer, 11, 2/3 (1999), pp85-90; 'Barak and the Bulldozers', Evangelicals Now, August (1999), p10; 'An Alternative Theology of the Holy Land: A Critique of Christian Zionism', Churchman, 113, 2 (1999), pp125-146; 'The Premised Land, Palestine and Israel' in They Came and They Saw, edited by Michael Prior (London, Melisende, 2000), pp144-161; 'A Survey of Guidebooks on the Holy Land' in A Third Millennium Guide to Pilgrimages to the Holy Land, edited by Duncan Macpherson (London, Melisende, 2000), pp71-83; 'Christian Zionism and its impact on Justice' Al-Aqsa Journal, 3,1 (2000), pp9-15; 'Christian Zionism, True Friends of Israel?' Evangelicals Now, December (2000), p14; 'Dispensational Approaches to the Land' in The Land of Promise, Biblical, Theological and Contemporary Perspectives, edited by Philip Johnston & Peter Walker (IVP, Leicester, 2000), pp142-171; 'The Broken Promise Land' Movement, SCM, Winter (2000/2001), pp8-10; 'Justifying Apartheid in the Name of God', Churchman, Summer (2001), pp147-171; 'The Future of Christianity in the Holy Land', Al Aqsa Journal, 4, 1 (2001), pp9-14; Christian Zionism, Justifying Apartheid in the Name of God, Defining Evangelicalism's Boundaries, based on a paper delivered at the Evangelical Theological Society annual conference, Colorado Springs, November 2001,

already contributed to the international debate on the significance of Christian Zionism among both advocates⁸⁷ as well as critics.⁸⁸

Because there has been little research into the origins, basis or consequences of Christian Zionism, the assumption that it is theologically orthodox and synonymous with Evangelicalism has remained largely uncontested. This research will challenge this proposition providing a comprehensive appraisal of the movement which it is hoped will form the basis for constructive dialogue between proponents and critics in the future.

(Liverpool, Friends of Sabeel UK, 2001).

⁸⁷ Tony Higton 'Christian Zionism: Tony Higton of CMJ responds', Evangelicals Now, December (2000); Melanie Phillips, 'Christians Who Hate the Jews' The Spectator, 13 February (2002), pp14-15. Melanie Phillips describes the author's views as anti-Semitic. 'Sizer is a leading crusader against Christian Zionism. He believes that God's promises to the Jews have been inherited by Christianity.' See also 'Palestinian Christian revisionism has revived replacement theology' http://christianactionforisrael.org/antiholo/hate_jews.html

⁸⁸ Michael Prior, 'A Perspective on Pilgrimage to the Holy Land' in Jerusalem: What Makes for Peace, edited by Naim Ateek, Cedar Duabis and Marla Schrader, (London, Melisende, 1997), p130; The Bible and Colonialism, a Moral Critique, (Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1997) p325; Zionism and the State of Israel, (London, Routledge, 1999), p136; Colin Chapman, Whose Promised Land? rev. edn., (Oxford, Lion, 2002), pp8, 197-198, 275-276, 279, 287; Andy Peck, 'Whose Land? The Israeli-Palestinian debate', Christianity & Renewal, August (2002), pp12-15.

Chapter 2: The Historical Roots of Christian Zionism since 1800

An analysis of the history of Western Christian attitudes toward the Jewish people and State of Israel lies beyond the scope of this study and has already been examined by others comprehensively.⁸⁹ Furthermore, the development of non-Jewish Zionism⁹⁰ and its origins in Puritanism,⁹¹ Millenarianism⁹² and the apocalyptic writings popular between the 17th and 19th centuries has been well researched.⁹³

This chapter will instead focus on specific historical events, socio-cultural factors and theological developments which have been determinative in the rise of evangelical Christian Zionism within British and American religious and political circles, from the early 19th Century until the present day. It examines the influence of a relatively small group of British evangelical Christian leaders who were instrumental in revitalising Historic or Covenantal Premillennialism out of which emerged the theological system known as Dispensationalism. While both are based on a literal and futurist hermeneutic and favour Jewish restoration, Covenant Premillennialism teaches that God's

⁸⁹ Kenneth Cragg, The Arab Christian, A History in the Middle East, (London, Mowbray, 1992); Thomas A. Idinopulos, Jerusalem Blessed, Jerusalem Cursed, Jews, Christians and Moslems in the Holy City from David's Time to Our Own, (Chicago, Ivan R. Dee, 1991); Michael Prior & William Taylor, eds., Christians in the Holy Land, (London, World of Islam Festival Trust, 1994); Barbara W. Tuchman, Bible and Sword, How the British came to Palestine, (London, Macmillan, 1982); P.W.L. Walker, ed, Jerusalem, Past and Present in the Purposes of God, 2nd edn. (Carlisle, Paternoster Press, 1994); Michael Prior, Zionism and the State of Israel, A Moral Inquiry, (London, Routledge, 1999).

⁹⁰ Regina Sharif, Non-Jewish Zionism, Its Roots in Western History, (London, Zed, 1983); Paul C. Merkley, The Politics of Christian Zionism 1891-1948, (London, Frank Cass, 1998).

⁹¹ Douglas J. Culver, Albion & Ariel, British Puritanism and the Birth of Political Zionism, (New York, Peter Lang, 1995); Peter Toon, 'The Latter-Day Glory', in Puritans, the Millennium and the Future of Israel: Puritan Eschatology 1600-1660, edited by Peter Toon, (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1970); Ian Murray, The Puritan Hope: Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy, (London, Banner of Truth, 1971).

⁹² J.F.C. Harrison, The Second Coming, Popular Millenarianism 1780-1850, (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979); J. A. DeJong, As the Waters Cover the Sea: Millennial Expectations in the Rise of Anglo-America Missions, 1640-1810, (Kampen, J. H. Kok, 1970).

⁹³ David A. Rausch, Zionism within early American Fundamentalism, 1878-1918; a convergence of two traditions, (New York: Mellen Press, 1979); Grace Halsell, Prophecy and Politics, Militant Evangelists on the Road to Nuclear War, (Westport, Connecticut, Lawrence Hill, 1986); Donald Wagner, Anxious for Armageddon, (Scottdale,

future purposes for restored Israel will be related to the Church and both will enjoy God's blessing together during the millennium.⁹⁴ Dispensationalists however, distinguish between God's eternal purposes for Israel and the Church, in separate dispensations: the former seen as God's earthly people, the latter his heavenly people. Dispensationalism is essentially sectarian in origin, preceding and inspiring the development of both Christian and Jewish Zionism. It has also become normative within American evangelical, Pentecostal and charismatic churches, para-church institutions and mission agencies. While Classical Dispensationalism has remained predominantly evangelistic, since 1970 especially, new forms of dispensational Christian Zionism have emerged in America, distinguished by their different emphases. Three, in particular, have influenced the development of Christian Zionism: Apocalyptic Dispensationalism is preoccupied with the 'signs of the times'; Messianic Dispensationalism with reaching Jews for Jesus; and Political Dispensationalism with defending and 'blessing' Israel. These different and sometimes contradictory strands of evangelical Christian Zionism share three basic tenets: a commitment to biblical literalism; a futurist eschatology; and the restoration of the Jews to Palestine.

1. The Early Intimations: Proto-Christian Zionism

1.1 The Emergence of Biblical Literalism

While advocates claim that Christian Zionism is entirely biblical in origin,⁹⁵ its genesis as a theological doctrine and religious movement lies within the Protestant Reformation. The Reformation brought about a renewed interest in the Old Testament and God's dealings with the Jewish people. The translation, publication, and free access to the Bible among the laity created a

Pennsylvania, Herald Press, 1995).

⁹⁴ This view was propounded by among others Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Benjamin Newton, Samuel Tregelles, J. C. Ryle, Andrew & Horatius Bonar, Francis Schaeffer and Martyn Lloyd Jones. Christian Witness to Israel and many serving with the Churches Ministry among Jewish People identify with this position. See Errol Hulse, The Restoration of Israel, (Worthing, Henry Walter, 1968).

⁹⁵ Wendell Stearns, Biblical Zionism, (Hilversum, Holland, Moriah Foundation, 1994); International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, Christians and Israel, Essays in Biblical Zionism and on Islamic Fundamentalism, (Jerusalem, International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, 1996); Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Israelology, The Missing Link in Systematic Theology, (Tustin, California, Ariel, 1989).

major paradigm shift in popular thinking. Interpretation was no longer the exclusive prerogative of an ecclesiastical hierarchy. From Protestant pulpits right across Europe, the Bible was now taught within its historical context and given its plain literal sense rather than an allegorical interpretation as had been the custom for centuries within the Roman Catholic Church. At the same time, a new assessment of the place of the Jews within the purposes of God emerged, especially through the writings of Theodore Beza, John Calvin's successor in Geneva, and Martin Bucer in Strasbourg.⁹⁶ In his Institutes of the Christian Religion, Calvin stressed that divine blessing was associated with and dependent upon covenantal obedience.⁹⁷ Furthermore, Calvin insisted that there was only one covenant in which both old and new covenant believers shared, 'For, even now, the only kingdom of heaven which our Lord Jesus Christ promises to his followers, is one in which they may sit down with Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob (Matth. 8:11).'⁹⁸

While Calvin and Luther understood the word 'Israel' in Romans 11:25 to refer to the Church made up of both Jewish and Gentile believers, as had the Roman Catholic Church, Theodore Beza, (Calvin's successor in Geneva) and Martin Bucer, preferred to apply the word to unbelieving Jews and Judaism. The various editors of the Geneva Bible, influenced both by Calvin and Beza increasingly favoured this interpretation. According to Peter Toon, in the 1557 and 1560 editions a short note on Romans 11 defined 'Israel' as 'the nation of the Jews'. In later editions, this was amplified to suggest a conversion of the Jewish nation to Christ. 'He sheweth that the time shall come that the whole nation of the Jews, though not everyone particularly, shall be joined to the church of Christ.'⁹⁹ Through the notes accompanying this translation, which became the most widely read translation in England and Scotland prior to the King James version, together with the writings of Puritans such as William Perkins and Hugh Broughton, the idea of the

⁹⁶ Gary DeMar & Peter Leithart, The Legacy of Hatred Continues, (Tyler, Texas, Institute of Christian Economics, 1989), p45ff.

⁹⁷ John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, electronic edition. IV, xvi, 14. (Garland, TX: Galaxie Software, 1999).

⁹⁸ Ibid., II, x, 2, 23.

⁹⁹ Murray, op.cit., p41.

conversion of the Jewish people spread in Britain and the American Colonies.¹⁰⁰

1.2 The Conversion and Restoration of the Jews

In the history of Christian theology, speculation concerning the interpretation of Revelation 20:1-10 and the meaning of the millennium has led theologians to suggest three alternatives:¹⁰¹ Postmillennialism teaches a literal or symbolic period of a thousand years in which the Church triumphs over evil before Christ returns; Premillennialism teaches that Christ will return to save the Church from evil and then reign for a thousand years on earth; Amillennialism teaches that the millennium is symbolic, or already 'realised'¹⁰² and refers to heaven where departed souls reign with Christ.

Puritan eschatology was essentially postmillennial and, based on Romans 9-11, believed the conversion of the Jews would lead to future blessing for the entire world. 'Puritan England and covenanting Scotland knew much of spiritual blessing and it was the prayerful longing for wider blessing, not a mere interest in unfulfilled prophecy, which led them to give such place to Israel.'¹⁰³ Thomas Brightman (1562-1607), who has been described as the father of the doctrine of the 'Restoration of the Jews',¹⁰⁴ also predicted the imminent conversion of the Jewish people.¹⁰⁵ In his Apocalypsis Apocalypseos¹⁰⁶, meaning, 'A Revelation of the Revelation' he speculated that the seven vials began with Elizabeth's accession to the throne in 1558 and the seventh trumpet of Revelation 10 had been sounded in 1588 with the destruction of the Spanish Armada. He argued that the Turkish Empire (the

¹⁰⁰ Toon, op.cit., p24.

¹⁰¹ Stanley J. Grenz, The Millennial Maze. Sorting out Evangelical Options, (Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, 1992); Robert G. Clouse, ed., The Meaning of the Millennium, (Downers Grove, InterVarsity, 1977); Cornelis P. Venema, The Promise of the Future, (Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 2000), pp189-362.

¹⁰² Ibid., p235.

¹⁰³ Murray, op.cit., pp59-60.

¹⁰⁴ Sharif, op.cit., p18.

¹⁰⁵ Toon, op.cit., p26.

¹⁰⁶ First published in Frankfurt in 1609. The English translation, A Revelation of the Revelation, published in Amsterdam, dates from 1615. Samuel Macauley Jackson ed. The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1953). See also R. Clouse, "The Apocalyptic Interpretation of Thomas Brightman

false prophet), having formed an unholy alliance with the Roman Church (the Antichrist), would be destroyed followed by 'the calling of the Jews to be a Christian nation', leading to 'a most happy tranquillity from thence to the end of the world.'¹⁰⁷ His commentary on Daniel 11-12, first published in 1614, was subtitled, The restoring of the Jewes and their callinge to the faith of Christ after the utter overthrow of their three enemies is set forth in livelie colours.¹⁰⁸ Brightman was also convinced that 'the rebirth of a Christian Israelite nation' would become 'the centre of a Christian world'.¹⁰⁹ Brightman's preaching and writings attracted considerable attention and his views were influential even in English government circles. In 1621, for example, Sir Henry Finch, an eminent lawyer and member of Parliament, developed Brightman's views further, publishing a book entitled, The World's Great Restauration (sic) or Calling of the Jews, (and with them) all the Nations and Kingdoms of the Earth, to the Faith of Christ. In it he argued:

'Where Israel, Judah, Zion and Jerusalem are named [in the Bible] the Holy Ghost meant not the spiritual Israel, or the Church of God collected of the Gentiles or of the Jews and Gentiles both ... but Israel properly descended out of Jacob's loynes. The same judgement is to be made of their returning to their land and ancient seats, the conquest of their foes ... The glorious church they shall erect in the land itself of Judah ... These and such like are not allegories, set forth in terrene similitudes or deliverance through Christ (whereof those were types and figures), but meant really and literally the Jews.'¹¹⁰

Other Reformers such as Richard Sibbes, Samuel Rutherford and John Owen, also postmillennialists, were equally convinced that one day the Jews would be brought to faith in Jesus Christ and become part of the Church, for which they prayed earnestly.¹¹¹ This belief in the conversion of the Jews was so universally embraced that it was written into the Westminster Larger Confession and Congregationalist 'Savoy Declaration' of 1658. The latter affirmed:

and Joseph Mede," Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society, Vol. XI (1968), 181-193.

¹⁰⁷ Edward E. Hindson, 'Medieval and Reformation Backgrounds of Dispensationalism' The Conservative Theological Society (2001), <http://www.conservativeonline.org>

¹⁰⁸ The English translation was published in 1644.

¹⁰⁹ Toon, op.cit., pp30-31.

¹¹⁰ Mayir Verete, 'The Restoration of the Jews in English Protestant Thought, 1790-1840', Middle Eastern Studies, 8, p14. See also Wagner, op.cit., p87.

‘We expect that in the latter days, Antichrist being destroyed, the Jews called, and the adversaries of the kingdom of his dear Son broken, the churches of Christ being enlarged and edified through a free and plentiful communication of light and grace, shall enjoy in this world a more quiet, peaceful and glorious condition than they have enjoyed.’¹¹²

It was this optimistic postmillennial worldview, which in part provided the motivation for the expansion of European Protestant missionary movements in the 17th and 18th Century. For example, convinced that Jewish restoration to the Land would follow their conversion to Christ, in 1649, Ebenezer and Joanna Cartwright, English Puritans living in Amsterdam, sent a petition to the English government. It called for the lifting of the ban on Jews settling in England and assistance to enable them to move to Palestine. ‘That this Nation of England, with the inhabitants of the Netherlands, shall be the first and the readiest to transport Israel’s sons and daughters on their ships to the land promised to their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for an everlasting inheritance.’¹¹³ This was apparently the first time human intervention had been sought to achieve a Jewish restoration rather than rely on God to accomplish it.¹¹⁴

By the late 17th Century and right through the 18th Century, especially during the period of the Great Awakening, postmillennial eschatology came to dominate European and American Protestantism.¹¹⁵ The writings and preaching of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758),¹¹⁶ as well as George Whitefield, were influential in the spread of the belief that the millennium had arrived, that the gospel would soon triumph against evil throughout the world and God’s blessings of peace and prosperity would follow the conversion of entire nations, including Israel, prior to the glorious return of Christ.¹¹⁷

¹¹¹ DeJong, op.cit., pp27-28.

¹¹² DeJong, op.cit., p38.

¹¹³ See Don Patinkin, ‘Mercantilism and the Readmission of the Jews to England.’ Jewish Social Studies, 8. July (1946), pp161-78; and Cecil Roth, England in Jewish History, (London, Jewish Historical Society of England, 1949), p7, cited in Sharif, op.cit., p24.

¹¹⁴ Sharif, op.cit., p25.

¹¹⁵ Cornelis P. Venema, The Promise of the Future, (Edinburgh, Banner of Trust, 2000), pp219-229.

¹¹⁶ Jonathan Edwards, ‘The History of the Work of Redemption’, The Complete Works of Jonathan Edwards, Volume 2 (Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 1974).

¹¹⁷ Other leading theologians to espouse this view included J. A. Alexander, Robert Dabney,

‘Though we do not know the time in which this conversion of Israel will come to pass, yet this much we may determine by Scripture, that it will be before the glory of the Gentile part of the Church shall be established ... Jewish infidelity will be overthrown. Jews will cast away their old infidelity. They shall flow together to the blessed Jesus ... Nothing is more certainly foretold that this national conversion of the Jews in Romans XI ... They shall then be gathered into one fold together with the Gentiles.’¹¹⁸

Based on his interpretation of Revelation 16:1, Edwards speculated that the vials of God’s wrath had been poured out during the Reformation; that the Papacy might expire in 1866; Islam would be destroyed; the Jews converted; and the heathen of America, Africa and India soon brought to faith in Jesus.¹¹⁹ In the context of such a renewed and Christianised world, Palestine gradually came to be seen as the rightful Jewish homeland. Under the protection of the Protestant Church, a proto-Zionist movement emerged convinced the Bible promised that the Jewish people, once ‘converted’ to Christianity, would then return to Palestine and enjoy a national existence alongside other Christian nations prior to the Second Advent. If the proto-Zionist era of the 17th and 18th Centuries might be characterised by the relationship between the Puritans and the ‘Israelites’, in the 19th Century this shifted to the bond between evangelicals and the Jews.¹²⁰

2. The Socio-Political Context for the Rise of Christian Zionism

The late 18th and early 19th Centuries saw a dramatic movement away from the optimism of postmillennialism following a sustained period of turmoil on both sides of the Atlantic.¹²¹ This was associated with the American War of

Charles Hodge, A. A. Hodge, B.B. Warfield, Loraine Boettner and Charles H., Spurgeon. See also ‘Postmillennialism’ in The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views, edited by Robert G. Clouse, (Downers Grove, Illinois, InterVarsity, 1977), pp17ff.

¹¹⁸ Jonathan Edwards, The Complete Works of Jonathan Edwards, Volume 1 (Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 1974), p607.

¹¹⁹ Robert G. Clouse, Robert N. Hosack and Richard V. Pierard, The New Millennium Manual, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker, 1999), pp90-91.

¹²⁰ Jan Nederveen Pieterse, ‘The History of a Metaphor: Christian Zionism and the Politics of Apocalypse’ Archives de Sciences des Religions, 75 (1991), pp75-104.

¹²¹ A small number of 19th Century Postmillennial theologians did continue to espouse a form of Jewish Restorationism but only as a consequence of Jewish people coming to faith in Jesus and being incorporated within the Church. These include Charles Simeon (1759-1836) and David Brown (1803-1897), who was Edward Irving’s assistant at Regent Square and who wrote The Second Advent (1849) and The Restoration of Israel, (1861). Erroll Hulse also identifies with this position, The Restoration of Israel, (Worthing, Henry Walter, 1968). Since

Independence (1775-1784), the French Revolution (1789-1793) and the Napoleonic Wars (1809-1815).

With the fall of several European monarchies between 1804 and 1830, coupled with widespread unrest in England, Napoleon's menacing words, 'I have always followed fortune and the god of war'¹²² seemed an ominous sign of the end of the world.

In 1804, Napoleon had been crowned Emperor of the Gauls in the reluctant presence of the Pope. In 1807 he agreed to divide Europe with the Czar of Russia and blockaded British goods in Europe. In 1809 he had arrested the Pope and annexed the Papal States. By 1815, Napoleon's armies had fought, invaded or subjugated much of Europe and the Middle East, including Italy, Austria, Germany, Poland, Russia, parts of Palestine and Egypt. Napoleon set his brothers on the thrones of Holland, Naples, Spain and Westphalia as well as giving his son the title 'King of Rome'. His intention was to create a confederated Europe, each ruled by a vassal monarch, subject to himself as 'supreme King of Kings and Sovereign of the Roman Empire'.¹²³ Numerous preachers and commentators, including Robert Jamieson and George Stanley Faber, speculated on whether Napoleon represented the Antichrist.¹²⁴ Others predicted that, in fulfilment of Daniel 2, ten European kingdoms including England, France, Spain and Austria were about to revive the Holy Roman Empire and form a United States of Europe in partnership with the Antichrist.¹²⁵ For example, Jamieson speculated:

the Restorationist movement became dominated by Covenant premillennialists and dispensationalists from the early 19th Century, this thesis has concentrated on their contribution. The previous chapter has explored the early intimations of proto-Christian Zionism within the Reformation and Puritan period which was dominated by Postmillennialists. See Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Israelology, The Missing Link in Systematic Theology, (Tustin, California, Ariel Ministries, 1989), pp14-122.

¹²² Andrew Drummond, Edward Irving and His Circle, (London, James Clarke), p132.

¹²³ G. H. Pember, The Great Prophecies of the Centuries concerning Israel and the Gentiles, (London, Hodder, 1902), pp236-241.

¹²⁴ J. N. Darby, 'Remarks on a tract circulated by the Irvingites', Collected Writings, edited by William Kelly (Kingston on Thames, Stow Hill Bible and Trust Depot, 1962), Doctrinal. IV, 15, p2; Andrew Drummond, Edward Irving and His Circle (London, James Clarke, n.d.), p132; Janet M. Hartley, 'Napoleon in Russia: Saviour or anti-Christ? History Today, 41 (1991); Richard Kyle, The Last Days are Here Again, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker, 1998), p71.

¹²⁵ George H. Fromow, ed., B. W. Newton and Dr. S.P. Tregelles, Teachers of the Faith and the Future, (Taunton, Phoenix, n.d.), pp120-127.

‘The First Napoleon’s Edict published at Rome in 1809, confiscating the papal dominion and joining them to France, and later the severance of large portions of the Pope’s territory from his sway and the union of them to the dominions of the king of Italy, virtually through Louis Napoleon, are the first instalment of the full realization of this prophecy of the whore’s destruction.’¹²⁶

Napoleon’s destruction of the Roman Catholic Church in France; his seizure of church assets; execution of priests; and the exile of the Pope from Rome all appeared to corroborate this. Some even believed they were witnessing the ‘deadly wound’ inflicted on the ‘Beast’ predicted in Revelation 13.¹²⁷

These tensions and upheavals fuelled the Second Great Awakening; the Revivals associated with Charles Finney; the Adventism of Joseph Miller; and the founding of the Jehovah’s Witnesses by Charles Taze Russell. They also brought about a renewal of interest in prophecy which eventually led to a revival of Premillennialism within mainstream and sectarian Evangelicalism.

George Stanley (1773-1854), for example, was one of the earliest to write speculative treaties on prophecy in the 19th Century. In 1804, while Vicar of Stocton on Tees, he wrote, A Dissertation on the Prophecies that have been fulfilled, are now fulfilling or will hereafter be fulfilled relative to the Great Period of 1260 years, the Papal and Mohammedan (sic) Apostasies, the Tyranical Reign of the Antichrist or the Infidel Power and the Restoration of the Jews¹²⁸ Faber identified Napoleon, the head of the revived Roman Empire, as the antichrist. He predicted Napoleon would be destroyed in Palestine by a Western alliance of England and Russia. Faber recognized England as the ‘Isles of the Sea’ referred to in Isaiah 24:15 and the ‘ships of Tarshish’ mentioned in Isaiah 60:9 since England was ‘the great maritime sea

¹²⁶ Robert Jamieson, Commentary on Revelation 17, Commentary, Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible (London, Oliphants, 1934).

¹²⁷ Clouse, Hosack & Pierard, op.cit., p92.

¹²⁸ George Stanley Faber, A Dissertation on the Prophecies that have been fulfilled, are now fulfilling or will hereafter be fulfilled relative to the Great Period of 1260 years, the Papal and Mohammedan (sic) Apostasies, the Tyranical Reign of the Antichrist or the Infidel Power and the Restoration of the Jews, (London, F.C. & J. Rivington, 1804). Faber also wrote Dissertation on the Mysteries of the Cabiri (1803) and The Origin of Pagan Idolatry in 3 volumes (1816, Ballantrae Reprints 1999).

power'. As England's ally in the Napoleonic wars, Russia's prophetic involvement as the 'king of the North' in Daniel 11 would be benevolent.¹²⁹

Charles Finney is representative of those in America who also predicted the imminent end of the world. In 1835, for example, he speculated that 'If the church will do all her duty, the Millennium may come in this country in three years.'¹³⁰ Joseph Miller narrowed the return of Christ down to the 21st March 1843, while Charles Russell more prudently predicted that Christ would set up his spiritual kingdom in the heavenlies in 1914. Russell's success was in part due to the launch of a magazine in 1879, entitled, Zion's Watchtower which had an initial print run of 6,000 copies. Within a century, this had increased to 15 million copies. For many years, Russell's popular sermons linking biblical prophecy with contemporary events were reproduced in over 1,500 newspapers in the USA and Canada.¹³¹

At the same time in America and Europe there was renewed interest in both the Orient¹³² as well as the Jewish people,¹³³ in part shaped by a growing literary romanticism infatuated with the Hebrew world.¹³⁴ Authors included Robert Byron, Walter Scott, William Wordsworth, Robert Browning and George Eliot.¹³⁵ Eliot, for example, not only attended synagogue services regularly but also held dialogues with Jewish Rabbis. In 1874 Eliot began working on Daniel Deronda, described by Sharif as, 'the first truly Zionist novel in the history of non-Jewish fiction', and as 'the apex of non-Jewish

¹²⁹ George Stanley Faber, A General and Connected View of the Prophecies relative to the Conversion, Restoration, Union and Future Glory of the Houses of Judah and Israel. The Progress and Final Overthrow of the Antichristian Confederacy in the Land of Palestine and the Ultimate General Diffusion of Christianity, (London, F.C. & J Rivington, 1809). p4. See also Dwight Wilson, Armageddon Now! The Premillenarian Response to Russia and Israel since 1917, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, 1977). p20.

¹³⁰ Charles Finney, Lectures on Revival, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1960), p306.

¹³¹ Clouse, Hosack & Pierard, op.cit., p116.

¹³² Naomi Shepherd, The Zealous Intruders: The Western Rediscovery of Palestine, (London, Collins, 1987); Linda Osband, Famous Travellers to the Holy Land, (London, Prion, 1989).

¹³³ David A. Rausch, Fundamentalist Evangelicals and Anti-Semitism (Valley Forge, Trinity Press International, 1993); Zionism within early American Fundamentalism, 1878-1918, a convergence of two traditions, (New York, Mellen Press, 1979).

¹³⁴ Sharif, op.cit., p34.

¹³⁵ Sharif, op.cit., pp34-47. See also Margaret Brearley, 'Jerusalem in Judaism and for Christian Zionists' in Jerusalem, Past and Present in the Purposes of God, edited by P. W. L. Walker (Cambridge, Tyndale House, 1992), p110.

Zionism in the literary field'.¹³⁶ She observes how Eliot dispensed with the idea of Jewish emancipation being linked to or dependent on, their conversion and integration within the Church. 'Restoration had instead become identified with a return to the Hebrew heritage.'¹³⁷

Interest in the land of Palestine itself was largely due to a succession of archaeological discoveries, military adventurism and the growing number of travelogues published which fired the popular imagination. Between 1800 and 1875, over 2,000 authors wrote about the Holy Land. Dean Stanley's guide book, Sinai & Palestine, for example, went through four editions within a year of its publication in 1856.¹³⁸ Other popular authors included William Thackeray,¹³⁹ Gertrude Bell,¹⁴⁰ Robert Byron,¹⁴¹ Robert Graves,¹⁴² Alexander Kinglake,¹⁴³ Rudyard Kipling,¹⁴⁴ T.E. Lawrence,¹⁴⁵ Freya Stark¹⁴⁶ and William Thomson.¹⁴⁷ As early as the 1830s, a visit to the Near East formed part of the grand tour taken by most young European gentlemen.¹⁴⁸

The Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF) was founded in 1865 by a group of distinguished British academics and clergymen, most notably James Finn, the British Consul in Jerusalem, Lord Shaftesbury, the Dean of Westminster Abbey, Arthur P. Stanley and Sir George Grove. The object of the PEF remains to promote research into the history, geology, archaeology,

¹³⁶ Sharif, op.cit., p46.

¹³⁷ Sharif, op.cit., p46.

¹³⁸ Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, Sinai & Palestine, (London, Murray, 1871).

¹³⁹ William M. Thackeray, Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo, revised edition (Heathfield, Cockbird, [1848] 1990).

¹⁴⁰ Gertrude Lowthian Bell, The Desert and the Sown, (London, Heinemann, 1907).

¹⁴¹ Robert Byron, The Road to Oxiana, (London, Macmillan, 1937).

¹⁴² Robert Graves, Lawrence and the Arabs, (London, Jonathan Cape, 1927).

¹⁴³ Alexander Kinglake, Eothen, Traces of Travel Brought Home from the East, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1906).

¹⁴⁴ Rudyard Kipling, Kim, (London, Penguin, [1901] 1987).

¹⁴⁵ T.E. Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom, A Triumph, (New York, Fleming H. Revell, 1920).

¹⁴⁶ Freya Stark, East is West, (London, John Murray, 1945).

¹⁴⁷ William M. Thomson, The Land and the Book, (London, T. Nelson & Sons, 1887).

¹⁴⁸ J.G. Davies, Pilgrimage Yesterday and Today, (London, SCM, 1988), p140.

topography and natural sciences of biblical Palestine and the Levant.¹⁴⁹ However, Finn and Shaftesbury, both avid restorationists, saw the PEF primarily as a vehicle for achieving the return of the Jews to Palestine.¹⁵⁰ The PEF was also associated with many of the outstanding names in Middle East exploration, including Major General Sir Charles Wilson, General Sir Charles Warren, Claude Regnier Condor, Lt. Horatio Kitchener of Khartoum and T. E. Lawrence. The Survey of Western Palestine undertaken between 1871 and 1878 by Condor and Kitchener, together with soldiers of the Royal Engineers, was the first cartographic survey ever conducted of Palestine and provided the Zionist movement with invaluable information on natural resources and locations for settlement.

In 1869, the Suez Canal was opened, coincidentally in the same year Thomas Cook led his first tour group to Jerusalem made up of sixteen ladies, thirty three gentlemen, and two assistants. By the end of the 19th Century, his company had arranged for 12,000 tourists to visit the Holy Land. It is not an exaggeration to say that Cook probably did more than any other person to facilitate and shape evangelical contact with the Holy Land. His reputation as an organizer of pilgrimages grew after he was invited in 1882 to arrange the visit by Prince Edward, later King Edward VII, and his son Prince George, later King George V. In 1872, Cook wrote the following analysis of his new enterprise:

‘The educational and social results of these four years of Eastern travel have been most encouraging. A new incentive to scriptural investigation has been created and fostered; ‘The Land and the Book’ have been brought into familiar juxtaposition, and their analogies have been better comprehended; and under the general influence of sacred scenes and repeated sites of biblical events, inquiring and believing spirits have held sweet counsel with each other.’¹⁵¹

These political, literary, geographical, and educational factors provided the context for a growing interest among evangelical Christians in a futurist interpretation of Old Testament prophecy, in the rediscovery of the land of Palestine and in the conversion and restoration of the Jewish people.

¹⁴⁹ Palestine Exploration Fund, <http://www.pef.org.uk/index.htm>

¹⁵⁰ Cited by Derek White, Christian Friends of Israel, <http://www.cfi.org.uk/chrzion1.htm>

¹⁵¹ Davies, op.cit., p148.

As the postmillennialism of the Reformation and Puritanism gave way to a more pessimistic Premillennialism of the early 19th Century, two differing views regarding the relationship of the Church to the Jewish people emerged at the same time and developed in parallel. Historic or Covenantal Premillennialism believed that Jewish people would be incorporated within the Church and return to Palestine a converted nation alongside other Christian nations. Dispensational Premillennialism, however, came to believe the Jewish people would return to the Land before or after their conversion but would remain distinctly separate from the Church. The former view became the driving force behind the restorationist movement and British Christian Zionism while the latter came to dominate in the United States. Both perspectives were present within the Albury Circle in embryonic form and each will be considered in turn.

3. The Origins of Covenantal Premillennial Restorationism in Britain

As has been shown, the beginning of the 19th Century was one of great turmoil right across Europe. One of the first to contribute to the renaissance in Premillennialism and to link it to Jewish restoration was George Stanley Faber. In 1809, by which time he had become the Rector of the parish of Red Marshall in County Durham, he wrote, A General and Connected View of the Prophecies relative to the Conversion, Restoration, Union and Future Glory of the Houses of Judah and Israel. The Progress and Final Overthrow of the Antichristian Confederacy in the Land of Palestine and the Ultimate General Diffusion of Christianity,¹⁵²

In May of the same year, 'The London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews' was formed. The less accurate description of 'London Jews' Society' (LJS) eventually proved more popular.¹⁵³ Their earliest objective was essentially philo-Semitic, for the purpose of visiting and relieving the sick and distressed, and instructing the ignorant, especially such

¹⁵² George Stanley Faber, A General and Connected View of the Prophecies relative to the Conversion, Restoration, Union and Future Glory of the Houses of Judah and Israel. The Progress and Final Overthrow of the Antichristian Confederacy in the Land of Palestine and the Ultimate General Diffusion of Christianity, (London, F.C. & J Rivington, 1809).

¹⁵³ George H. Stevens, Go, Tell My Brethren: A Short Popular History of Church Missions to Jews, (London, Olive Press, 1959), p13.

as are of the Jewish nation.¹⁵⁴ This charitable endeavour soon also came to embrace Jewish restoration.¹⁵⁵ It was the combination of these twin objectives, evangelism and Restorationism within the LJS, which gave Christian Zionism its first distinct identity as an embryonic movement, and its earliest location within British Evangelicalism.

A small number of influential Christian leaders helped determine the emergence, priorities and future direction of the LJS as well as other philo-semitic missionary societies formed in 19th Century Britain.¹⁵⁶ They were driven by a literal hermeneutic, a covenantal premillennial eschatology and shared a strong commitment to evangelise the Jewish people. Four of the most significant leaders were: Lewis Way (financial); Charles Simeon (evangelistic); Joseph Woolfe (missiologist); and Charles Haddon Spurgeon (restorationist).

3.1 Lewis Way: The Financial Benefactor (1772-1840)

Lewis Way may be regarded as the founder of the LJS as well as the foremost exponent of 19th Century Restorationism and Christian Zionism.¹⁵⁷ A barrister and Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, in 1804, he purchased Stanstead Park, an impressive Georgian mansion at Emsworth in Hampshire and set up a college to convert Jews to Christianity. He then rescued the London Jews' Society from a £20,000 debt, on condition that it became an Anglican society. With the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, he began to promote the cause of Jewish emancipation and settlement in Palestine by lobbying the European heads of state to support the provision of a Jewish homeland. Way found an ally in Czar Alexander I of Russia who shared an

¹⁵⁴ Kelvin Crombie, For the Love of Zion: Christian Witness and the Restoration of Israel, (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1991), p13.

¹⁵⁵ Crombie, op.cit., p15.

¹⁵⁶ The British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Among the Jews (1842), the Mildmay Mission to the Jews (1876) and the Barbican Mission to the Jews (1879), for example. See John Wilkinson, Israel My Glory or Israel's Mission, and Missions to Israel, (London, Mildmay Mission to the Jews' Bible and Tract Depot, 1889). By 1910 there were 99 missions to the Jews worldwide with 914 known missionaries. See William Bjoraker, 'The Beginning of Modern Jewish Missions in the English Speaking World,' Mishkan, 16.1, (1992), p62.

¹⁵⁷ Stevens, op.cit., p21; Crombie, op.cit., pp14-15.

interest in Jewish Restorationism.¹⁵⁸ Way's efforts culminated in October 1818 when he spoke at the Congress of Aix la Chapelle before the leaders of Great Britain, Prussia, Russia, Austria and France urging them to support Zionism. Influenced by his association with Edward Irving and Joseph Wolfe, and using the pseudonym 'Basilicus', Way then wrote a series of speculations on the restoration of the Jews and the imminent return of Christ in the LJS journal, The Jewish Expositor, between 1820-1822.¹⁵⁹ In 1821, Way published a pamphlet, The Latter Rain, in which he called Christians to pray for the Jews based on the conviction that Old Testament prophecies have a 'primary and literal reference to the Jews.'¹⁶⁰ Way galvanised evangelical support for Zionism by promoting a futurist eschatology which anticipated that the exiled Jewish people would soon return to their promised homeland. Crombie claims Way and the LJS provided the leadership within the evangelical movement that was calling for the restoration of national Israel.¹⁶¹ Far from being a lunatic fringe phenomenon, through Way's efforts, Restorationism came to be embraced by the evangelical establishment and even enjoyed the support of a significant proportion of the English episcopacy. Way was aided in this most notably by Charles Simeon who helped found several 'Religious Societies for Diffusing the Knowledge of the Gospel', such as the Church Missionary Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Simeon Trust and the Prayer-Book and Homily Society.¹⁶²

3.2 Charles Simeon: The Optimistic Evangelist (1759-1836)

The growth of Christian Zionism within Anglican evangelical circles was undoubtedly shaped to a large degree by the initiatives of Charles Simeon. Simeon became consumed with a passion for the conversion of Jews and the work of the London Jews Society, looking also for 'a full and imminent

¹⁵⁸ Crombie, op.cit., p15.

¹⁵⁹ D. W. Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, A History from the 1730's to the 1980's, (London, Unwin Hyman, 1989), p83.

¹⁶⁰ Lewis Way, The Latter Rain, 2nd edition (London, 1821), cited in Bebbington, op.cit., p88.

¹⁶¹ Crombie, op.cit., p15.

restoration of God's chosen people.'¹⁶³ He conducted preaching tours on behalf of the LJS and spoke on Jewish evangelism and Restorationism right across the UK. His notes were even distributed as far away as India and the United States.¹⁶⁴ Simeon was convinced, based on his reading of the Bible, that the Jews would soon return to Palestine, but, significantly, only as Christians.¹⁶⁵ He claimed, 'The future restoration of the Jews, and their union with the Gentiles in one universal Church ... both of these events will take place together, or in the nearest connexion with each other.'¹⁶⁶ Unlike Irving and Darby, Simeon remained a postmillennialist¹⁶⁷ and believed the millennium had already begun.¹⁶⁸ For this reason, he was energetic in promoting evangelism among the Jews, confident that through their conversion, dispersed throughout the world, they would act as evangelists so that, 'God will shortly interpose to bring all nations to such a unity in religious faith and practice as has never been seen upon earth.'¹⁶⁹ Simeon was convinced, therefore, that the conversion of the Jews would be the consummation of God's purposes on earth and bring blessing to the whole world:

¹⁶² Daniel Wilson, 'Recollections of the Rev Charles Simeon' William Carus, Memoirs of the Life of Charles Simeon, (London, Hatchard & Son, 1848), p844.

¹⁶³ Arthur Pollard, 'The Influence and Significance of Simeon's Work' in Charles Simeon 1759-1836, edited by Arthur Pollard & Michael Hennell (London, SPCK, 1964), p180.

¹⁶⁴ Charles Simeon, 'Letter to Rev T. Thomason, December 24, 1817' in Wilson, op.cit., pp470-471.

¹⁶⁵ Charles Simeon, 'The Restoration of the Jews' Horae Homileticae, VI, (London: Holdsworth & Ball, 1832), pp198; 'The Restoration and Conversion of the Jews' Horae Homileticae, II, (London, Holdsworth & Ball, 1832), p437.

¹⁶⁶ Charles Simeon, 'Conversion of the Jews and Gentiles' Horae Homileticae, X, (London, Samuel Holdsworth, 1836), p240; 'Conversion of the Jews Gradual' Horae Homileticae, VIII, (London, Samuel Holdsworth, 1832), pp10-14.

¹⁶⁷ Charles Simeon, 'The First Resurrection' Horae Homileticae, XXI, (London, Samuel Holdsworth, 1840), p237. Simeon is included within a section on covenantal Premillennialism because his influence was principally among those who identified with that position.

¹⁶⁸ Charles Simeon, 'God the Light and Temple of the New Jerusalem' Horae Homileticae, XXI, (London, Samuel Holdsworth, 1840), pp259; see also his 'Letter to Rev T. Thomason, May 16, 1813' in Wilson, op.cit., p364.

¹⁶⁹ Charles Simeon, 'The Millennial Period Fast Approaching' Horae Homileticae, VIII, (London, Samuel Holdsworth, 1836), p24.

‘But still richer benefits will flow to the world from ... their future restoration. That the Jews will in due time be converted to Christianity is certain ... God has decreed that they shall be converted; and we have reason to believe that the period fixed for it in the Divine counsels is not far distant.’¹⁷⁰

Though he supported Restorationism, Simeon did not regard the physical restoration of the Jews to Palestine to be as significant as their spiritual restoration to God. ‘So rapid will their conversion be, that they will flock to Christ even as doves to their windows, and a nation will be born in a day ... If you desire only the conversion of the Gentile world, you should begin with the Jews; because it is the fulness of the Jews that is to operate on the Gentiles.’¹⁷¹

While others such as Edward Irving and J.N. Darby, were beginning to distinguish between God’s purposes for the Jews and those of the Church, Simeon held to a Reformed covenantal position, understanding Old Testament prophetic terms such as ‘Zion’ to have been fulfilled in the Church.¹⁷² In a sermon concerning the future of Israel, Simeon insisted, ‘We are God’s Israel, as much as ever they were; and heirs of all these blessings no less than they; for “if we be Christ’s, then are we Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”’¹⁷³ According to his biographer, Arthur Pollard, Simeon acted ‘as a kind of one-man general staff, preaching for the Society, recruiting workers, spreading propaganda, collecting funds, advising on overall strategy. He did so with even more than his usual sense of urgency.’¹⁷⁴ Simeon’s patronage of the LJS undoubtedly ensured that its restorationist agenda, advocated more strongly by others such as Way,

¹⁷⁰ Charles Simeon, ‘Gentiles blest by the Jews’ Restoration’ Horae Homileticae, XV, (London, Samuel Holdsworth, 1836), pp415, 418.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp416, 419.

¹⁷² Charles Simeon, ‘Gospel Effects in the Latter Days’ Horae Homileticae, VIII, (London: Samuel Holdsworth, 1832), pp. 4-7. See also his reference to ‘our Christian Zion’ in VI, (London: Holdsworth & Ball, 1832), p202.

¹⁷³ Charles Simeon, ‘The Future Prosperity of Israel’ Horae Homileticae, X, (London: Samuel Holdsworth, 1836), p240.

¹⁷⁴ Pollard, *op.cit.*, p180.

nevertheless gained increasingly widespread support not only among Anglicans but also among other evangelicals around the world.¹⁷⁵

3.3 Joseph Wolff: The Pioneer Missiologist (1795-1862)

Joseph Wolff was a German Jew, converted first to Roman Catholicism and then subsequently to Anglicanism, he became known as the ‘first great pioneer missionary’ of the LJS.¹⁷⁶ Wolff also played an influential role at the Albury ‘unfulfilled prophecy’ conference of 1826. Edward Irving describes his impact. ‘No appeal was allowed but to the Scriptures, of which the originals lay before us; in the interpretation of which, if any question arose, we had the most learned Eastern scholar perhaps in the world to appeal to, and a native Hebrew. I mean Joseph Wolff.’¹⁷⁷ This disregard for traditional interpretation or scholastic helps at Albury marks a radical discontinuity with the presuppositions of mainstream Reformed theology, and prepared the ground for Irving and Darby’s sectarian futurist premillennial Dispensationalism.

Like Hugh McNeile, another Anglican member of the ‘Albury Circle’,¹⁷⁸ Wolff was preoccupied with the discovery of the lost ‘Ten Tribes’ of Israel, so indispensable to any future restoration of the Jews.¹⁷⁹ A report about their possible discovery was received by Mr Sargon at the LJS annual conference of 1822. Another report given by Henry Drummond at the 1828 Albury Conference claimed that traders from the lost Jewish tribes had been discovered in Leipzig. ‘The Tribes have been discovered, twenty millions in number, inhabiting the region north of Cashmere and towards Bokhara, in the great central plain of Asia. It would seem that there came men from them to Leipsic fair ... They were trading in Cashmere shawls.’¹⁸⁰ Wolff, fluent in

¹⁷⁵ Stevens, op.cit., p27.

¹⁷⁶ H. P. Palmer, Joseph Wolff, His Romantic Life and Travels, (Heath Cranton, 1935); Stevens, op.cit., p32.

¹⁷⁷ Margaret Oliphant, The Life of Edward Irving, 3rd edition (London, Hurst & Blackett, 1864), p205. See also Andrew L. Drummond, Edward Irving and his Circle, (London, James Clarke, 1936), p133.

¹⁷⁸ Drummond, op.cit., p133.

¹⁷⁹ Hugh McNeile, The Collected Works, Vol. II. The Prophecies Relative to the Jewish Nation, (London, The Christian Book Society, [1830] 1878), pp431ff.

¹⁸⁰ Oliphant, op.cit., p243.

Arabic, Hebrew, Chaldean, Persian and Syriac set out that same year to find the Lost Tribes, travelling as far as India, Armenia, and Abyssinia.¹⁸¹ He spent much of the rest of his life speaking on behalf of the LJS, travelling in search of, and ministering to, Oriental Jews.

3.4 Charles Haddon Spurgeon: The Baptist Restorationist (1834-1892)

Spurgeon was probably England's most influential 19th Century non-conformist preacher. With 67 volumes of his sermons published, this is more than any other author in English history. Indeed, more of his works are in print today than of any other Christian author, alive or deceased.¹⁸² Spurgeon enjoyed a photographic memory and accumulated one of the largest personal theological libraries in the entire British Empire.¹⁸³ Although Iain Murray considers Spurgeon to have had a 'fundamental uncertainty'¹⁸⁴ in his mind on eschatological matters, and Hulse classifies him as a postmillennialist, Swanson demonstrates convincingly that Spurgeon affirmed an historical or covenantal premillennial position, and 'added his considerable voice to the question of Jewish restoration to the Promised Land.'¹⁸⁵

Spurgeon's premillennial views are found in several of his sermons: 'I conceive that the advent will be premillennial; that he will come first; and then will come the millennium as the result of his personal reign upon earth.'¹⁸⁶

Referring to postmillennialism, Spurgeon observed:

'There are sanguine brethren who are looking forward to everything growing better and better and better, until, at the last this present age ripens into a millennium. They will not be able to sustain their hopes, for Scripture gives them no solid basis to rest upon ... Apart from the second Advent of our Lord, the world is more likely to sink into pandemonium than to rise into a millennium ... We look to the

¹⁸¹ Drummond, op.cit., p133.

¹⁸² Eric W. Hayden, 'Did You Know: A Collection of True and Unusual Facts About Charles Haddon Spurgeon' Christian History, 29 (1991) pp2-3, cited in Dennis M. Swanson, 'Charles H. Spurgeon and the Nation of Israel, A Non-Dispensational perspective on a Literal National Restoration.' An unpublished paper delivered at the Evangelical Theological Society Conference in Nashville, November (2000).

¹⁸³ Swanson, op.cit., p2.

¹⁸⁴ Iain H. Murray, The Puritan Hope: Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy, (Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 1971), p363; Hulse, op.cit., p154.

¹⁸⁵ Swanson, op.cit., p2.

¹⁸⁶ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 'Justification and Glory', Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, 11, (London, Passmore & Alabaster, 1862-1917), p249.

darkening down of things; the state of mankind, however improved politically, may yet grow worse and worse spiritually.¹⁸⁷

During the Down-Grade Controversy that led to his withdrawal from the Baptist Union over the rise of liberalism within the denomination, Spurgeon contributed to a statement of faith clarifying his doctrinal views. The final point reads, 'Our hope is the Personal Pre-Millennial Return of the Lord Jesus in Glory.'¹⁸⁸ Spurgeon was a premillennialist because he held to a literal hermeneutic. This is why he rejected an amillennial position. 'We expect a reigning Christ on earth; that seems to us to be very plain, and put so literally that we dare not spiritualise it.'¹⁸⁹ Spurgeon also repudiated dispensational Premillennialism which was emerging at the same time, rejecting any suggestion that God had separate purposes for the Jews apart from the Church. Not without a little sarcasm he observed:

'Distinctions have been drawn by certain exceedingly wise men (measured by their own estimate of themselves), between the people of God who lived before the coming of Christ, and those who lived afterwards. We have even heard it asserted that those who lived before the coming of Christ do not belong to the church of God! We never know what we shall hear next, and perhaps it is a mercy that these absurdities are revealed at one time, in order that we may be able to endure their stupidity without dying of amazement. Why, every child of God in every place stands on the same footing; the Lord has not some children best loved, some second-rate offspring, and others whom he hardly cares about ... Before the first advent, all the types and shadows all pointed one way – they pointed to Christ, and to him all the saints looked with hope. Those who lived before Christ were not saved with a different salvation to which shall come to us. They exercised faith as we must; that faith struggled as ours struggles, and that faith obtained its reward as ours shall.'¹⁹⁰

Spurgeon saw the Church and Israel one day united spiritually; the Church, not Israel, as the recipient of the kingdom promises; the Church and Israel due to face the tribulation together; and the millennial kingdom on earth the

¹⁸⁷ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 'The Form of Godliness Without the Power', Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, 35, (London, Passmore & Alabaster, 1862-1917), p301.

¹⁸⁸ 'Mr. Spurgeon's Confession of Faith', in The Sword and Trowl, 26, August (1891), pp446-448.

¹⁸⁹ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 'Things to Come', Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, 15 (London, Passmore & Alabaster, 1862-1917), p329.

¹⁹⁰ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 'Jesus Christ Immutible', Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, 15 (London, Passmore & Alabaster, 1862-1917), p8.

culmination of God's purposes for the Church made up of both Jews and Gentiles.¹⁹¹

As a covenantal premillennialist, Spurgeon not only believed in the restoration of Israel but from its inception supported the work of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Amongst the Jews. Although similar in name and objectives, it was a non-conformist equivalent of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews, which was by then, Anglican. The new society was formed in November 1842, ironically in Edward Irving's former church, the 'National Scotch Church' in Regent's Square, London. With the support of Robert Murray M'Cheyne and Andrew Bonar, the new society worked in partnership with the Church of Scotland's Mission to the Jews.¹⁹² In an address based on Ezekiel 37:1-10, delivered to the Society in 1864 entitled, 'The Restoration and Conversion of the Jews', Spurgeon said:

'There will be a native government again; there will again be the form of a body politic; a state shall be incorporated, and a king shall reign. Israel has now become alienated from her own land. Her sons, though they can never forget the sacred dust of Palestine, yet die at a hopeless distance from her consecrated shores. But it shall not be so forever ... "I will place you in your own land" is God's promise to them ... They are to have a national prosperity which shall make them famous ... If there be anything clear and plain, the literal sense and meaning of this passage – a meaning not to be spirited or spiritualised away – must be evident that both the two and the ten tribes of Israel are to be restored to their own land, and that a king is to rule over them.'¹⁹³

Spurgeon preached on the same subject on several other occasions linking three great themes; a national Jewish repentance; a restoration to the Land; and the return of Jesus. Spurgeon also suggested a chronology that placed these three events in close proximity:

'It is certain that the Jews, as a people, will yet own Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of David as their King, and that they will return to their own land, and they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former

¹⁹¹ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 'There be Some That Trouble You', The Sword and Trowl, March (1867), p120. Swanson, op.cit., p9.

¹⁹² The agency is now known as Christian Witness to Israel, an interdenominational evangelistic society which has also enjoyed the support of Martyn Lloyd Jones and Francis Schaeffer. <http://www.cwi.org.uk>

¹⁹³ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 'The Restoration and Conversion of the Jews', Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, 10, (London, Passmore & Alabaster, 1862-1917), p426.

desolations, and they shall repair the old cities, the desolations of many generations ... For when the Jews are restored, the fullness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in; and as soon as they return, then Jesus will come upon Mount Zion with his ancients gloriously, and the halcyon days of the millennium shall then dawn; we shall then know every man to be a brother and a friend; Christ shall rule with universal sway.¹⁹⁴

Spurgeon saw the millennium as the culmination of God's promises and purposes for both the Old and New Testament Church, yet at the same time allowed a distinct role for a converted Israel during the millennium. He even envisaged that 'if the temple itself be not restored, yet on Zion's hill shall be raised some Christian building, where the chants of solemn praise shall be heard as erst of the old Psalms of David were sung in the Tabernacle.'¹⁹⁵

Spurgeon therefore held to a covenantal premillennial view of Israel, neither spiritualising the Old Testament promises nor replacing the Church. 'He would neither make the millennium the exclusive domain of Israel without the church, nor would he exclude the national Israel from the glorious church of the millennium.'¹⁹⁶ In the light of the way dispensational Premillennialism was evolving at the same time, with its focus on prophetic speculation, Spurgeon held the line on the gospel priority with both wit and precision:

'Your guess at the number of the beast, your Napoleonic speculations, your conjectures concerning a personal Antichrist – forgive me, I count them but mere bones for dogs; while men are dying, and hell is filling, it seems to me the veriest drivel to be muttering about an Armageddon at Sebastopol or Sadowa or Sedan, and peeping between the folded leaves of destiny to discover the fate of Germany.'¹⁹⁷

Spanning the 19th Century, Lewis Way, Charles Simeon, Joseph Wolf and Charles Spurgeon shared a common passion to see Jewish people come to faith in Jesus Christ. Their literal reading of the Bible and premillennial eschatology gave them confidence that the Jewish people as a nation would soon turn to Christ, be restored to the land of Palestine after which Jesus

¹⁹⁴ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 'The Harvest and Vintage', Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, 50, (London, Passmore & Alabaster, 1862-1917), p553; Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 'The Church of Christ', New Park Street Pulpit, 1, (London, Passmore and Alabaster, 1856-1861) pp213-214.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Swanson, op.cit., p17.

¹⁹⁷ Charles H. Spurgeon, Lectures to My Students, First Series (London, Passmore and Alabaster, 1877), p83.

would return to set up his millennial kingdom. Support for Restorationism was a personal matter and secondary to the priority of gospel ministry among the Jews.

From the same premillennial roots, a very different form of Christian Zionism was emerging in parallel in Britain during the 19th Century. Known as Dispensationalism, it gradually reversed those priorities, giving greater emphasis to restoration than evangelism as it became increasingly preoccupied with interpreting biblical prophecy and discerning its contemporary fulfilment.

4. The Origins of Dispensational Christian Zionism in Britain

The development of Dispensationalism in the 19th Century and the revolution in futurist prophetic speculation concerning the Church and Israel can be largely attributed to Edward Irving,¹⁹⁸ John Nelson Darby, Benjamin Newton and others associated with the Albury and Powerscourt prophetic conferences held between 1826 and 1833.¹⁹⁹

4.1 Edward Irving and the Albury Prophetic Conferences (1792-1834)

Born at Annan in Scotland in 1792, Irving was licensed as a minister of the Church of Scotland in 1815. Having accepted a call in 1822 to pastor the Church of Scotland congregation at the Caledonian Chapel in Hatton Gardens, London, Irving soon became a popular if controversial and eccentric speaker, De Quincey describing Irving as ‘the greatest orator of our times.’²⁰⁰ The Chapel became too small and a larger church was built in Regent Square

¹⁹⁸ Murray, op.cit., p188. Irving was also one of the forerunners of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement. Arnold Dallimore, The Life of Edward Irving: The Fore-runner of the Charismatic Movement, (Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 1983); Gordon Strachan, The Pentecostal Theology of Edward Irving, (Peabody, Massachusetts, 1973). George Eldon Ladd, however, attributes the revival of ‘futurist’ or historic Premillennialism in the 19th Century to S.R. Maitland, James Todd and William Burgh. See George Eldon Ladd, The Blessed Hope, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1956), pp35-40. Maitland’s first publication is dated 1826, James Todd’s 1838, and William Burgh’s 1835. While they may indeed have been influential, since Irving acknowledges his indebtedness to Hatley Frere and his own premillennial sermons are dated as early as 1824, it is still appropriate to regard Irving as the earliest proponent of this view in the 19th Century.

¹⁹⁹ Rowland A. Davenport, Albury Apostles, (London, Free Society, 1970).

²⁰⁰ Murray, op.cit., p188.

in 1827.²⁰¹ Because of his growing popularity, Irving was invited to preach at the annual service of the London Missionary Society in 1824, and a year later to the Continental Society, in both of which Henry Drummond was influential. On each occasion, Irving provoked a furore.²⁰² Irving's address in 1825 was entitled, 'Babylon and Infidelity Foredoomed.' In reaction to the prevailing optimistic postmillennial drive toward missionary expansion, Irving predicted that the world was about to experience a 'series of thick-coming judgements and fearful perplexities' before the imminent return of Jesus Christ.²⁰³ He insisted that missionary work, especially in Southern Europe, where the Continental Society concentrated its ministry, was futile because God's judgement was about to fall on the lands of the former Roman Empire who would align themselves with the Antichrist. Some walked out of the meeting in protest while the leaders of the Society accused Irving of undermining their ministry.²⁰⁴ When Irving's address was later published as Babylon and Infidelity Foredoomed, it was dedicated to Hatley Frere, a premillennial layman.²⁰⁵ Irving's biographer, Margaret Oliphant explains why:

'Several years before, Mr. Hatley Frere, one of the most sedulous of those prophetic students who were beginning to make themselves known here and there over the country, had propounded a new scheme of interpretation, for which, up to this time, he had been unable to secure the ear of the religious public. Not less confident in the truth of his scheme that nobody shared his belief in it, Mr. Frere cherished the conviction that if he could but meet some man of candid and open mind, of popularity sufficient to gain a hearing, to whom he could privately explain and open up his system, its success was certain. When Irving, all ingenuous and ready to be taught, was suddenly brought into contact with him, the student of prophecy identified him by an instant intuition. Here is the man!'²⁰⁶

²⁰¹ J. D. Douglas, 'Edward Irving' The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, edited by J. D. Douglas, revised edition (Exeter, Paternoster Press, 1978), p517.

²⁰² Dallimore, op.cit., p61.

²⁰³ Murray, op.cit., p189.

²⁰⁴ Dallimore, op.cit., p62.

²⁰⁵ In the foreword to Babylon and Infidelity Foredoomed : A Discourse on the prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse which relate to these Latter Times, and until the Second Advent, (Glasgow, 1826), Irving acknowledged his indebtedness to Frere's book, Treaties on the Prophecies of Daniel. See Oliphant, op.cit., p107.

²⁰⁶ Oliphant, op.cit., p189.

Frere insisted that the prophetic portions of scripture 'must be understood either literally throughout or figuratively throughout otherwise it will be utterly impossible to ascertain the meaning designed to be conveyed.'²⁰⁷ This led Frere to interpret the Book of Revelation as describing God's impending judgement on the Western and Eastern Roman Empires and upon 'Paganism, Popery and Infidelity.'²⁰⁸

Irving clearly resonated with Frere's futurist premillennial scheme and it seems Frere came to influence others within Irving's circle at one or more of the Albury conferences he attended in the years that followed. Like Frere and Faber, Irving became increasingly preoccupied with the interpretation of the apocalyptic writings of Daniel and Revelation. He calculated, for example, that the Church had suffered for 1,260 years under Papal rule from 533, when Justinian recognised the Bishop of Rome as head of the Church, until 1793.²⁰⁹ He also saw the French Revolution and Industrial Revolution as evidence of the 'Signs of the Times' and the imminent return of Christ. As Brightman had predicted some two hundred years earlier, Irving speculated that the first six vials of the Book of Revelation had already been poured out and claimed the seventh vial could be dated to the 1820s. Through the pages of the Morning Watch, Irving's colleague John Tudor explained the significance of 1793 and reasons for believing it signified the end of the Christian era:

This is that spirit of infidelity which, gaining the upper hand in France in May 1793, abolished public worship, declared the scriptures to be fable, treated them with utmost contempt, changed weeks for decades; substituted the year of the Republic for the Christian era; and did, as far as the influence of infidelity extended, overcome and kill these two witnesses, by suppressing their prophesying in which alone their life and power consisted.'²¹⁰

²⁰⁷ J. Hatley Frere, Notes Forming a Brief Interpretation of the Apocalypse intended to be read in connection with the combined view of the prophecies of Daniel, Edras and St John showing that all prophetic writings are formed upon one plan, (London, J. Hatchard & Sons, [1815] 1850), p2.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Flegg argues that on this Irving was also following a scheme devised by William Cunningham, *Dissertation on the Seals and Trumpets of the Apocalypse* (1813). See Columba Graham Flegg, Gathered under Apostles, A Study of the Catholic Apostolic Church, (Oxford, Clarendon, 1992), p325.

²¹⁰ John Tudor, Morning Watch I, December 1829, p563.3 cited in Mark Rayburn Patterson, Designing the Last Days: Edward Irving, the Albury Circle and the Theology of the Morning Watch, PhD. Kings College, London, 2001, p118.

In 1826, Irving was also introduced to the views of Manuel Lacunza, a Spanish Jesuit, who, disaffected by the corruption of Rome, had written a book under the pseudonym of Juan Josafat Ben-Ezra, first published in Spanish in 1812.²¹¹ Claiming to be the work of a converted Jew, the book was entitled, The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty. In it, Lacunza interpreted all but the first three chapters of the Book of Revelation as predicting imminent apocalyptic events. Irving was so excited by Lacunza's futurist speculations (which mirrored his own), that he mastered Spanish in order to translate and publish the work in English.²¹² Irving added a 194-page preface to the translation in which he presented, with great conviction, his own prophetic speculations about the end of the world, predicting the apostasy of Christendom, the subsequent restoration of the Jews and imminent return of Christ. The publication in English attracted widespread interest not least because of the association with Irving.²¹³

At the time, Irving was very much aware that he was virtually alone in proclaiming views which went well beyond even those of traditional Premillennialism which itself had not been popular within evangelical circles for over a century.²¹⁴ Irving did not appear intimidated by the knowledge that the evangelical establishment regarded his views as eccentric. Instead, he seemed to enjoy the notoriety:

‘These three points of doctrine concerning the Gentile church, the future Jewish and universal church, and the personal advent of the Lord to destroy the one and to build up the other, I opened and defended out of the scriptures from Sabbath to Sabbath, with all boldness, yet with fear and trembling ... at that time I did not know of one brother in the ministry who held with me in these matters ... so novel and strange a doctrine ... such uncivil and implacable language, concerning overwhelming judgements upon the very eve of the millennial blessedness ... but the more I examined, the more I was

²¹¹ Murray, op.cit., p190. A four volume edition was published in English in 1816. See Flegg, op.cit., p40.

²¹² Dallimore, op.cit., p62.

²¹³ Edward Irving, The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty, by Juan Josafat Ben-Ezra a converted Jew, Translated from the Spanish, with a Preliminary Discourse, (London, L.B. Seeley & Sons, 1827), pp5-6. Irving's preliminary discourse was subsequently published separately and more widely than Lacunza's own work. See Flegg, op.cit., p235, and fn 126 below.

²¹⁴ Murray, op.cit., p187.

convinced, and resolved, though alone and single-handed, to maintain these three great heads of doctrine from the holy scriptures, against all who should undertake to uphold the commonly - received notion, that the present Gentile dispensation was about to burst forth with the millennial blessedness, after which, to wind up and consume all, the Lord would come in the latter end.²¹⁵

Irving was in no doubt, the Gentile church was finished. Irving's pessimism predated and inevitably influenced Darby's similar denunciations of a 'failing church' and expectation of a future Jewish 'dispensation'.²¹⁶ Referring to the predictions Jesus had made concerning the destruction of Jerusalem in Matthew 24, Irving insisted these were a type and foreshadowing of the impending destruction of the Church. He wrote, 'And the reason why the destruction of Jerusalem can typify and foreshow the destruction of Gentile Christendom is, that they are both the acts of God's vengeance upon a backsliding and incorrigible Church.'²¹⁷ Irving insisted that even evangelical churches had 'set aside' the Bible and were more aligned to Paine's Age of Reason than the gospel. 'The intellect hath become all sufficient ... the Church is in the Laodicean state.'²¹⁸ On this issue Irving increasingly showed what his biographer Arnold Dallimore describes as 'sectarian bitterness and reckless dogmatism.'²¹⁹ Many saw him as a prophet while others 'a visionary quack.'²²⁰

On the first day of Advent in 1826, the same year Irving was translating Lacunza's work, Henry Drummond (1786-1860), a city banker, politician, and High Sheriff of Surrey,²²¹ opened his home at Albury Park to a select group of

²¹⁵ Edward Irving, The Rev. Edward Irving's Preliminary Discourse to the Work of Ben Ezra entitled the Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty, (1859 reprint, pp. 7-8).

²¹⁶ In a letter from S. P. Tregelles to Newton, both former Brethren leaders, written in 1865, Tregelles asks rhetorically, 'Did the Brethrenists get this doctrine from the Irvingites?' cited in T.C.F. Stunt, 'The Tribulation of Controversy: Dave MacPherson, the Rapture Plot: A Review.' Brethren Archivists' and Historians' Network Review (2000).

²¹⁷ Edward Irving, The Last Days: A Discourse on the Evil Character of These Our Times, Proving Them to be The 'Perilous Times' and the 'Last Days', (London, James Nisbet, 1850), p11.

²¹⁸ Drummond, op.cit., p130.

²¹⁹ Ibid., p130.

²²⁰ Murray, op.cit., p188.

²²¹ Twelve elders called 'angels' were appointed to pastor the congregation and administer the church in the expectation that the Lord would return to Albury in their life time.

some twenty invited guests to discuss matters concerning 'the immediate fulfilment of prophecy.'²²² Earlier in 1826, Irving, along with Lewis Way and James Hatley Frere, had founded the Society for the Investigation of Prophecy.²²³ At Drummond's suggestion, however, their meetings were eventually subsumed within those taking place at Albury.

In 1828 Drummond published his own work, Dialogues on Prophecy in which he asserted, like Irving, that God was about to judge the visible Church and return the Jewish people to Palestine. He predicted, 'during the time that these judgements are falling upon Christendom, the Jews will be restored to the land.'²²⁴

Edward Miller describes how the Albury Circle, 'met to deliberate on the great prophetic questions which at present do instantly concern Christianity.'²²⁵ Columba Flegg elaborates on their purpose:

'The Albury conferences were called for the purpose of examining the scriptures - and especially the prophetic writings - with a view to interpreting the political and social events of the day, and also determining the extent to which biblical prophecies had already been fulfilled in the life of Christ and the history of the Christian church, thus making it possible to identify those still awaiting fulfilment in the future.'²²⁶

Those present at Albury for these conferences, held during the portentous season of Advent, included Lewis Way and Joseph Wolff of the London Jews Society, Hatley Frere and Hugh McNeile, who in 1830 published The Prophecies Relative to the Jewish Nation.²²⁷ Like Irving and Drummond, McNeile advocated a separate status for the Jews apart from the Church, within their own 'dispensations'. He also predicted the imminent repentance and then restoration of the Jews, and finally their pre-eminence

Consequently, as each elder eventually died they were not replaced until there were none to pastor the congregation.

²²² Edward Miller, The History and Doctrines of Irvingism, volume 1 (London, Kegan Paul, 1878), p36.

²²³ Flegg, op.cit., p40.

²²⁴ Henry Drummond, Dialogues on Prophecy, (London, Nisbet, 1828), pp.ii-iii.

²²⁵ Miller, op.cit., p36.

²²⁶ Flegg, op.cit., p36.

²²⁷ Hugh McNeile, The Collected Works, Vol. II. The Prophecies Relative to the Jewish Nation, (London, The Christian Book Society, [1830] 1878).

on earth, a blessing to the whole world.²²⁸ Miller confirms the influence of Lewis Way's literalism on Irving and the Albury circle.

'The meetings of those people who were interested in the question of the immediate fulfilment of prophecy and were anxious to work out the application, according to the special mode of interpretation then adopted by Irving and his friends, owed their origin to a suggestion made by Mr Lewis Way to Mr Drummond.'²²⁹

Further conferences were held annually during Advent at Albury between 1826 and 1830. About two thirds of those who attended were, like Lewis Way, convinced Anglicans, Daniel Wilson, later becoming Bishop of Calcutta. Others of the Moravian, Church of Scotland and Nonconformist churches also participated, as well as Lady Powerscourt,²³⁰ S. Percival, the son of the Prime Minister and E. Simon, Director of the Jews' Asylum in London.²³¹

Irving described the atmosphere of the first conference, 'the six days we spent under the holy and hospitable roof of Albury House ... no council, from that first which convened at Jerusalem until this time, seemed more governed, and conducted, and inspired by a spirit of holy communion.'²³² Irving called the Albury conferences a 'Prophetic Parliament'²³³ and a 'School of the Prophets'.²³⁴ His notes reveal the distinction he was already beginning to make between God's continuing purposes for the Jews in a restored land apart from those which applied to the Church:

'Perfect unanimity:

1. That the present Christian dispensation is not to pass insensibly into the millennial state by gradual increase of the preaching of the gospel; but that it is to be terminated by judgements, ending in the destruction of this visible Church and polity, in the same manner as the Jewish dispensation has been terminated.
2. That during the time that these judgements are falling upon Christendom, the Jews will be restored to their own land.
3. That the judgements will fall principally, if not exclusively, upon Christendom, and begin with that part of the Church of God that

²²⁸ Ibid., pp431 ff.

²²⁹ Miller, op.cit., p36.

²³⁰ Murray, op.cit., p191.

²³¹ Davenport, op.cit., pp22-23; see also, Miller, op.cit., p41, for another list of participants.

²³² Irving, 'Preliminary' op.cit., pp197-202.

²³³ Miller, op.cit., p35

²³⁴ Ibid., p42.

has been highly favoured, and is therefore most deeply responsible.

4. That the termination of these judgements is to be succeeded by that period of blessedness to all mankind, and even to the beasts, which is commonly called the millennium.
5. That a great period of 1260 years commenced in the reign of Justinian, and terminated at the French Revolution and that the vials of the Apocalypse began then to be poured out; that our blessed Lord will shortly appear and that therefore it is the duty of all who so believe to press these considerations on the attention of all men.²³⁵

According to Miller, at the conference in 1827, the interpretation of prophecy took 'a more definite turn' moving from general notions concerning the return of the Jews to Jerusalem and the Second Advent to more detailed applications as to the 'times and seasons' of the current period. 'The Apocalyptic vial was supposed to have been poured out on Rome in 1798 and it was concluded that the coming of our Lord would take place in 1847.'²³⁶ Miller notes charitably that in this 'method of precise interpretation they had ventured on unsafe ground.' He describes how news arrived during the conference of the death of the Duke of Reichstadt, the son of Napoleon. "That cannot be true", said one of them, springing from his seat, "for it would overturn this whole interpretation." Young Napoleon had been taken for the Beast of the Apocalypse.²³⁷ Interestingly, the conference of 1827 also deplored the unwillingness of other well-known evangelical leaders of the Clapham Sect such as William Wilberforce to participate.²³⁸

The conference held in 1828 focused more specifically on speculation concerning the imminent restoration of the Jews. McNeile offered corroborating evidence provided in a report given by a Mr Sargon to the LJS in 1822, which claimed that the 'Lost Tribes' had been discovered in India and China, calling themselves Beni-Israel, and longing for their restoration:

'... bearing, almost uniformly, Jewish names, but with Persian terminations ... They circumcise their own children ... they observe the Kippoor ... they call themselves Gorah Jehudi, or White Jews ... they

²³⁵ Ibid., pp44-45.

²³⁶ Ibid., p42.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ibid.

... speak of the Arabian Jews as their brethren ... they expect the Messiah, and that they will one day return to Jerusalem.²³⁹

In the same year, Irving published another book of over 500 pages entitled, The Last Days: A Discourse on the Evil Character of These Our Times, Proving Them to be The 'Perilous Times' and the 'Last Days'.²⁴⁰ The first chapter entitled, 'Introductory, to prove that the Last Times and Last Days of Holy Scripture are the Conclusion of the Jewish Captivity and the Gentile Dispersion.' Irving was emphatic - the Lord would return within the next few years and certainly within his lifetime. Irving also believed he would live to see the final battle of Armageddon, the Second Advent and the beginning of the Millennium.²⁴¹

'The times and fulness of the times, so often mentioned in the New Testament, I consider as referring to the great period numbered by times ... Now if this reasoning be correct, as there can be little doubt that the one thousand two hundred and sixty days concluded in the year 1792, and the thirty additional days in the year 1823, we are already entered upon the last days, and the ordinary life of a man will carry many of us to the end of them. If this be so, it gives to the subject with which we have introduced this year's ministry a very great importance indeed.'²⁴²

Irving went on to speculate that the Second Advent would occur in 1868, 'being fixed seventy-five years after 1793.'²⁴³ The Christian Observer noted the controversy Irving's eschatology was causing among the majority of evangelicals who in 1828 still held to a postmillennial approach to mission:

'A question has of late been much agitated, in connexion with the millennial reign of Christ ... namely whether the latter-day glory shall be ushered in with judgements or with mercy. The advocates for the former opinion, among whom are Mr Irving and Mr McNeile, speak in the strongest terms of the deteriorated and deteriorating state of the world; they view Christendom as verging to its downfall; they consider our Bible and missionary societies, not as instruments for ushering in the latter day glory, not as harbingers of mercy to the wide world, but only as messengers to gather out a few elect vessels, and to fill up the

²³⁹ McNeile, op.cit., pp433-434.

²⁴⁰ Irving, op.cit.

²⁴¹ P. E. Shaw, The Catholic Apostolic Church, (New York, King's Crown Press, 1946), p18, cited in Hennell, op.cit., p11.

²⁴² Ibid., pp10-22.

²⁴³ Drummond, op.cit., p130.

measure of the wicked, till God in his wrath shall consume the world of the ungodly, and bring in a whole new dispensation, even the Millennium of Christ's personal reign with his saints.'²⁴⁴

Two of the six points agreed a year later at the 1829 Albury conference still concerned the Jews, 'the Christian dispensation, like the Jewish, would be terminated suddenly in judgements; and the Jews would be restored to their land during the judgements.' Bebbington claims the bleak expectations of the Albury participants grew out of their 'sanguine hopes for the Jews'.²⁴⁵

The proceedings of the Albury Conferences from 1828 gained a wider audience through a short-lived but highly influential quarterly journal on prophecy published by Drummond, entitled the Morning Watch, described as a 'high-quality production' using the finest paper available combined with excellent editorship.²⁴⁶ The majority of the articles were unsigned although Drummond, Tudor and Carlyle are known to have contributed.²⁴⁷ Most deal with aspects of eschatology although Irving's name appears on articles concerning the humanity of Christ and manifestations of the Spirit. As will be shown in the next chapter, Darby's embryonic and rather rambling dispensational outline, published in 1836, was preceded by a much more developed scheme arising out of the Albury conference of 1830 published in the Morning Watch in 1831. 'None compare, in breadth and intricacy, to that developed by Albury and disseminated in the pages of the Morning Watch.'²⁴⁸

The journal came to an abrupt end, however, in June 1833. Andrew Drummond dates the emergence of the Catholic Apostolic Church out of Irving's loose circle of followers to the winding up of the Morning Watch, presumably because its benefactor, Henry Drummond as well as Tudor, its editor, became Apostles in the new Church.²⁴⁹ Drummond writes, 'few editors

²⁴⁴ The Christian Observer, June (1828), pp398-399, cited in Michael Hennell, Sons of the Prophets, (London, SPCK, 1979), p11.

²⁴⁵ Bebbington, op.cit., p83.

²⁴⁶ Dallimore, op.cit., p93.

²⁴⁷ Patterson, op.cit., p341.

²⁴⁸ 'The Seven Dispensations' Morning Watch, IV. 134.9f September (1831) cited in Patterson, ibid., p138.

²⁴⁹ Drummond writes, "We may date the transition from the Irvingite circle to the Apostolic Church from the winding up of the Morning Watch, June 1833." Drummond, op.cit., p233. Although sometimes wrongly described as the 'founder' of the Catholic Apostolic Church, Irving was nevertheless, according to Flegg, its 'catalyst.' See Flegg, op.cit., p462. Irving

have made such a valedictory statement as this.'

'The followers of Christ and the followers of Antichrist are now gathering. Christ is gathering His children into the true Church, to do Him service there, and, in so doing, to be prepared for His coming; Satan is gathering his hosts under the standard of Liberalism to become the pioneers of the man of perdition, the personal Antichrist. In the progress of this work, Christ hath been calling for the personal services of nearly all the regular correspondents of this journal; and he hath at length called the editor to take the place of an elder in His Church, and hath claimed all his time for the special duties of feeding and overseeing a sixth part of the flock in London. To this higher calling the editor now resolves to devote himself wholly, and at the same time brings the Morning Watch to a close, as he will not transfer to any other person such a solemn responsibility.'²⁵⁰

Timothy Stunt also claims that the CAC emerged through Irving's influence among some of those attending the Albury Conferences who 'came to believe that the special gifts of the apostolic age were a permanent endowment of the church, restrained only by the faithlessness of later Christians.'²⁵¹ J.D.

Douglas notes that many of Irving's followers, sometimes called Irvingites by critics,²⁵² were 'erstwhile Presbyterians' who eventually became members of the CAC.²⁵³ Patterson gives this helpful assessment of the legacy of Irving and the Albury Circle:

'The Albury Circle was a product of its own age and thus a theology shaped by romanticism's love for grand all inclusive systems, the enlightenment's rational methodology and their own subjective polemic. These coalesced to form a system that was tacitly understood to be God's final revelation. The progressive nature of revelation, the prophetic nature of the Bible, the literal-typical hermeneutic, and a specific philosophy of history determined their approach to theology and scripture and rendered their systematic program all but inevitable. Its self-fulfilling character affirmed its validity that in turn locked the Circle into a system and perspective beyond which they could see

himself was not recognised as one of the twelve latter-day apostles when the CAC was formed but humbly accepted the position of deacon.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Timothy Stunt, 'Catholic Apostolic Church', The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. J.D. Douglas (Exeter, Paternoster, 1978) p203. The early Scottish Pentecostal manifestations associated with Mary Campbell and James and Margaret McDonald in 1830 together with similar manifestations in Irving's London Church in 1831 were also influential in the formation of the CAC as well as their eventual separation from J. N. Darby and the early Brethren dispensationalists.

²⁵² J. N. Darby, 'Remarks on a tract circulated by the Irvingites,' Collected Writings, Doctrinal. IV, 15, p34.

²⁵³ J. D. Douglas, 'Edward Irving'. Ibid., p517.

nothing else.’²⁵⁴

Edward Irving’s premature death in 1834 while on a preaching tour of Scotland left a void in both Pentecostal momentum and millennial speculations concerning the Latter Days, the reins of the CAC in Henry Drummond’s hands, the hope of the restoration of Israel to men like Lewis Way and the LJS and the cause of Dispensational Premillennialism to be shaped by John Nelson Darby and his Brethren colleagues.

4.2 John Nelson Darby and the Rise of Dispensationalism (1800-1882)

John Nelson Darby is regarded by many as the father of Dispensationalism and the most influential figure in the development of its progeny, Christian Zionism.²⁵⁵ Darby was initially ordained in the Church of Ireland in 1825 but, like Irving, came to renounce both Anglican and Dissenting churches, as apostate. In Darby’s case it followed a disagreement with his bishop over the expectation that catholic converts had to swear allegiance to the English king.²⁵⁶ Darby wrote later, ‘This manifestation of the glory of Christ by the Church in unity no longer exists.’²⁵⁷ His analysis of the contemporary ecclesiastical scene was to become increasingly pessimistic, judgemental and sectarian. His repeated response was to declare ‘The Church is in ruins’.²⁵⁸ He went on to insist that this was not merely the result of denominational division but that, ‘... the entire nature and purpose of the church has become so perverted that it is diametrically opposed to the

²⁵⁴ Patterson, op.cit., p166.

²⁵⁵ Donald E. Wagner, Anxious for Armageddon, (Waterloo, Ontario, Herald Press, 1995), pp81,88. This is disputed by Charles Ryrie who attempts to place the origin of Dispensationalism, some 150 years earlier, allegedly finding evidence in the writings of Pierre Poiret (1646-1719) and John Edwards (1639-1716) as well as Isaac Watts (1674-1748). See Charles Ryrie, Dispensationalism, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1995), pp65-71.

²⁵⁶ W. G. Turner, John Nelson Darby (London, Chapter Two, [1901] 1986), p17.

²⁵⁷ J. N. Darby, ‘Reflections on the Ruined Condition of the Church’, The Collected Writings of John Nelson Darby, edited by William Kelly (Kingston on Thames, Stow Hill Bible and Trust Depot, 1962), Eccl. I, I, p201.

²⁵⁸ Darby, ‘On the Formation of Churches, Further Developments’ Collected., op.cit., Eccl. I, 1, p303. See also ‘What the Christian has amid the Ruin of the Church’, Collected., op.cit., Eccl. III, XIV.

fundamental reason for which it is instituted.²⁵⁹ The prevailing eschatology arising from the 18th Century Great Awakening had been essentially postmillennial, inspiring great optimism and an impetus to worldwide missionary expansion.²⁶⁰ Following Edward Irving's lead, Darby also opposed this perspective vigorously. In 1840, he insisted:

'We are to expect evil, until it becomes so flagrant that it will be necessary for the Lord to judge it ... I am afraid that many a cherished feeling, dear to the children of God, has been shocked this evening; I mean, their hope that the gospel will spread by itself over the whole earth during the actual dispensation.'²⁶¹

Darby's distinctive premillennial views were also inevitably influenced by those of a similar persuasion whom he met at the prophetic conferences held near Dublin under the sponsorship of Lady Powerscourt from 1830 to 1833, which followed a similar pattern to those held in Albury.²⁶² Increasingly, however, the Powerscourt conferences came to be shaped by Darby's own dominating and charismatic leadership.²⁶³ These exclusive prophetic gatherings, which focused on a pessimistic interpretation of world events and the imminent return of Christ, confirmed Darby's own denunciation of the established churches. Roy Coad insists, 'He felt himself an instrument of God, burdened with an urgent call to His people to come out of associations doomed to judgement.'²⁶⁴ Whereas the five annual Albury Conferences drew together no more than forty individuals, the Powerscourt conference of 1831 attracted some four hundred 'elite' evangelicals²⁶⁵ drawn from all over Britain and Ireland.²⁶⁶ Brethren leaders present at Powerscourt Castle included J. N.

²⁵⁹ Darby, 'What is the Unity of the Church?' Collected., op.cit., Eccl. IV, XX, p456.

²⁶⁰ Murray, op.cit., pp105-185.

²⁶¹ Darby, 'Progress of Evil on the Earth' Collected., op.cit., Prophetic, 1, pp471,483.

²⁶² Lady Powerscourt, for example, attended one or more of the Albury conferences and Edward Irving visited her in Ireland. See Iain Murray, The Puritan Hope (Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 1971), p191.

²⁶³ Clarence Bass, Backgrounds to Dispensationalism, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1986), p146.

²⁶⁴ Coad, op.cit., p111.

²⁶⁵ F. Roy Coad, 'Prophetic Developments with Particular Reference to the Early Brethren Movement', Christian Brethren Research Fellowship Occasional Paper (1966), p24, cited in Murray, op.cit., p200.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p199.

Darby, George Muller²⁶⁷, Henry Soltau, John Synge, J. G. Bellett and Henry Craik. The final conference in 1833 ended with division between those who sided with the Brethren and those who still identified with the established churches. Coad describes Lady Powerscourt as in tears over the issue, having once agreed to marry Darby.²⁶⁸ In a letter to the Editor of the Christian Herald, Darby mentions some of the controversial subjects discussed at the Prophecy Conference held at Powerscourt Castle in September 1832:

‘The belief in the coming of a personal Antichrist was common ... The discussion of the subject of Antichrist led to an extensive development of scripture, and to much very profitable detection of the spirit by which he might work in the nations; though no definite conclusion was come to upon this; while the recognition of his actings amongst the Jews, in Jerusalem, was more definitely recognised by those more conversant with the subject.’²⁶⁹

Other subjects considered included the way the Old Testament was quoted in the New Testament, the prophetic nature of each book, speculation on the timing and signs of the Antichrist, and, significantly, ‘By what covenant did the Jews, and shall the Jews, hold the land? ... What light does Scripture throw on present events, and their moral character?’²⁷⁰ By 1840, when Darby delivered eleven lectures on prophecy in Geneva entitled, ‘The Hopes of the Church of God’, the answer to these questions was very clear, at least in his own mind. In the fifth lecture on ‘The Progress of Evil on the Earth’, he said:

‘What we are about to consider will tend to show that, instead of permitting ourselves to hope for a continued progress of good, we must expect a progress of evil; and that the hope of the earth being filled with the knowledge of the Lord before the exercise of His judgement, and the consummation of this judgement on the earth, is delusive. We are to expect evil, until it becomes so flagrant that it will be necessary for the Lord to judge it ... Truly, Christendom has

²⁶⁷ George Muller had earlier associated with the London Jews Society and served briefly as a missionary student among the Jews in London. However, while in sympathy for their objectives and willing to serve under their name, because of his ‘independent thinking’ he was unable to accept either their rule or salary and, instead, joined the Brethren and became a pastor in Teignmouth and then Bristol. See William Henry Harding, The Life of George Muller, (London, Morgan & Scott, 1914), pp32-44.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., p109.

²⁶⁹ John Nelson Darby, Letters of John Nelson Darby, 1832-1868, 1, (London, Stow Hill and Bible Tract Depot), p63.

²⁷⁰ Darby, Letters, op.cit., pp6-7.

become completely corrupted; the dispensation of the Gentiles has been found unfaithful: can it be restored? No! impossible.'²⁷¹

Despite compelling evidence of Irving's influence in these ideas of a failing Church and future Jewish dispensation, Darby rarely acknowledged anyone else in the formation of his own theological views.²⁷² There is, however, one lone reference to Irving in Darby's 34 volumes. It is the one implicit acknowledgement of Irving's influence, albeit in the context of Darby disassociating himself from the fanciful prophecies of the Irvingites and the Catholic Apostolic Church.

'The largest expression of piety and holiness prove nothing. They were found in Mr Irving's writings, and much most blessed and precious truth too; few writings could be named where there is so much.'²⁷³

Darby was a charismatic figure with a dominant personality. He was a persuasive speaker and zealous missionary for his dispensationalist beliefs. He personally founded Brethren churches as far away as Germany, Switzerland, France and the United States, and translated the entire Scriptures.²⁷⁴ The churches Darby and his colleagues planted with the seeds of Premillennial Dispensationalism in turn sent missionaries to Africa, the West Indies, Australia, New Zealand and, ironically, to work among the Arabs of Palestine. By the time of his death in 1885, around 1,500 Plymouth Brethren churches had already been founded worldwide.

From 1862 onwards his controlling influence over the Brethren in Britain waned due, in particular, to the split between Open and Exclusive Brethren in 1848.²⁷⁵ Darby consequently spent more and more time in North

²⁷¹ J. N. Darby, 'Progress of Evil on the Earth' Collected., op.cit., Prophetic, 1, pp471, 483, 486.

²⁷² According to Scofield, 'Irving was excluded, not for heresy in doctrine, but for his view on church order.' Arno C. Gaebelein, The History of the Scofield Reference Bible (Spokane, WA, Living Word Foundation, 1991), p43.

²⁷³ J. N. Darby, 'Remarks on a tract circulated by the Irvingites', Collected., op.cit., Doctrinal. IV, 15, p34.

²⁷⁴ Turner, op.cit., p53.

²⁷⁵ Darby disagreed with Newton's Christology and forced a division between those who came to be known as the Open Brethren led by men like George Muller and Henry Craik and his own Exclusive Brethren who became increasingly legalistic and separatist. See G. C. D. Howley, 'Plymouth Brethren' The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. J.D. Douglas (Exeter, Paternoster, 1978), pp789-790.

America, making seven journeys in the next twenty years. Sandeen estimates that Darby spent 40% of his time in the United States.²⁷⁶ During these visits, he came to have an increasing influence over evangelical leaders such as James H. Brookes, Dwight L. Moody, William Blackstone and C. I. Scofield. His ideas also helped shape the emerging evangelical Bible Schools and also 'Prophecy' conferences, which came to dominate both Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism in the United States between 1875 and 1920.²⁷⁷

Clarence Bass, in his definitive history of Dispensationalism describes Darby's abiding influence on American Evangelicalism:

'Suffice it to say that he stamped his movement with his own personality. Much of its spiritual atmosphere undoubtedly belongs to his influence; and certainly its interpretative principles, its divisive compartmentalization of the redemptive plan of God, its literalness as to prophetic interpretation, and its separatist spirit may be traced to this personality.'²⁷⁸

One of Darby's early associates in Plymouth, Benjamin Newton, also became a prolific writer on prophetic subjects, fuelling speculation on the timing of the Lord's return.

4.3 Benjamin Newton and the Impact of Prophetic Speculation (1807-1899)

Newton was one of the earliest Brethren leaders and his books were reprinted on numerous occasions between the 1850s and 1900s.²⁷⁹ He specialised in interpreting the contemporary European political scene in the light of biblical prophecy.²⁸⁰ He saw, for example, great significance in the fact that one of

²⁷⁶ Ernest R. Sandeen, 'Towards a Historical Interpretation of the Origins of Fundamentalism', Church History 36 (1967), p70, cited in John H. Gerstner, Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth (Brentwood, Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1991), p38.

²⁷⁷ Wagner, op.cit., p. 89.

²⁷⁸ Bass, op.cit., pp176.

²⁷⁹ B. W. Newton and Dr S. P. Tregelles, Teachers of the Faith and the Future, edited by George Fromow (London, Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony, n.d.).

²⁸⁰ Benjamin Wills Newton, Antichrist, Europe and the East: The Antichrist Future also the 1260 Days of Antichrist's Reign Future, (London: Houlston & Sons, 1859); Babylon: Its Revival and Future Desolation being the Second Series of Aids to Prophetic Enquiry, (London: Houlston & Sons, 1859); Map of Ten Kingdoms of Roman Empire, (London: Lucas Collins, 1863); Babylon: Its Future History and Doom with remarks on the Future of Egypt and Other Eastern Countries, 3rd edition (London: Houlston & Sons, 1890).

the Rothschilds was negotiating with the Sultan for the construction of a railway from Constantinople to Baghdad. He believed this to be one of many signs of the impending merger of the revived Eastern and Western halves of the Roman Empire, a 'Roman world, from England to the Euphrates' centred on Rome.²⁸¹ Writing in 1859, Newton comments at length on the theological significance of geo-political developments in Europe, 'The interests of France, Great Britain and Austria are more and more felt to be identical as respects the aggression of Russia; and this feeling Spain, Italy and Greece, will soon thoroughly share.'²⁸² His colourful predictive map of the ten kingdoms making up a revived Roman Empire, published in 1863, comprised the then most influential countries surrounding the Mediterranean, namely, France, Spain, Northern Italy, the Neapolitan States, Austria, Turkey, Greece, Syria and Egypt, together with the British Isles.²⁸³ Ironically, in his Prophetic Forecasts and Present Events re America and Russia, also published in 1863, Newton discounted growing speculation that America and Russia featured in biblical prophecy:

'Until recently (1863) many entertained the expectation that American Republicanism and Russian Despotism would ultimately divide the world between them. The slightest knowledge of Dan. 2 dispels all these illusions ... It is not, however, till the Ten Kingdoms are formed, and federally united, that the strength of the power to be exercised by them will be appreciated ... to hold in check and to control the nations of the world.'²⁸⁴

Allowing himself a degree of latitude regarding the timing of these events, Newton suggested in 1879, 'Whether it may be long and deadly; or whether the way of the Western Roman nations may be smoothed so as for the resuscitation of the East under their guardianship to be quietly and speedily effected, it is impossible for us to say.'²⁸⁵ In the foreword to Babylon: Its Future History and Doom with remarks on the Future of Egypt and Other

²⁸¹ Newton, Babylon, op.cit., p17.

²⁸² Newton, Antichrist, op.cit., p143.

²⁸³ Newton, Map, op.cit.

²⁸⁴ B. W. Newton, 'Prophetic Forecasts and Present Events Re America and Russia' (1863) in Teachers of the Faith and the Future, B. W. Newton and Dr S.P. Tregelles, edited by George H. Fromow (Taunton, Phoenix, n.d.).

²⁸⁵ Newton, Antichrist, op.cit., p146.

Eastern Countries, published in 1890, Newton could still insist, 'The result of the late war with Russia has been to bring the Turkish dominions into recognised political connection with Western Europe ... The ancient outline of the Roman Empire will again appear.'²⁸⁶

While some argue Newton did not share Darby's dispensational views,²⁸⁷ in his 'Statement of Doctrinal Belief' of 1897, he nevertheless affirmed seven dispensations: 'The Adamic - the Antediluvian - the Noahic - the Hagar dispensation of the Jews - the Nebuchadnezzar dispensation of power - the Sarah dispensation of the church - all have failed.'²⁸⁸ Newton also believed that during the millennium, '[Christ] will translate all His saints into its heavenly division, the Risen "Church of the first-born ones" (Heb. 12); and He will gather forgiven Israel and all the Millennial saints into its earthly branch ... During this period forgiven Israel will be exalted to be the chief of all nations.'²⁸⁹ Nevertheless, Newton's dispensational ideas differed considerably from those of Darby under whose leadership he had served for a time as chief assistant within the Plymouth Brethren. Newton rejected the idea of a secret Rapture or that the Jews and Church would be eternally separate. Newton insisted instead that at the end of the Millennium, 'The dispensation of "the fullness of times" shall have come, then, and not till then, will the Church as a whole be complete. The Old Testament saints, the saints of the present dispensation, and the millennial saints will form one glorified Church, and share the glories of their Lord's eternal reign.'²⁹⁰ In this regard, the outcome of Newton's millennial dispensational scheme was little different to that of Covenantal Premillennialists. Newton's views therefore demonstrate that a

²⁸⁶ Newton, Babylon, op.cit., pp145, 150. 'Shinar' is the earliest Hebrew name for Babylon. It is interesting that Charles Dyer, a contemporary Dallas Seminary dispensationalist, similarly regards the apocalyptic references to Babylon in the Book of Revelation to refer literally rather than figuratively to modern Iraq. See Charles Dyer, The Rise of Babylon, Signs of the End Times, (Wheaton, Illinois, Tyndale House, 1991).

²⁸⁷ Hulse, op.cit., p158; Swanson, op.cit., p7.

²⁸⁸ B. W. Newton, The Christian Witness, (Plymouth, The Christian Witness and Tract Co., 1838), p302.

²⁸⁹ Fromow, op.cit., pp56-61.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., p63.

diversity of opinion existed within 19th Century Dispensationalism as appears today between Classical and Progressive Dispensationalists.²⁹¹

In 1865, Newton's Propositions for Christian Consideration,²⁹² gained the endorsement of Horatius Bonar, for their strong premillennial emphasis. Indeed, even Charles Spurgeon invited Newton to lecture at his College²⁹³ and 'maintained warm and cordial relations' with Newton, George Muller and Samuel Tregelles.²⁹⁴ Like these and many other disaffected Brethren leaders, such as William Kelly, Newton eventually fell out with Darby and they parted acrimoniously.²⁹⁵ Newton eventually came to recognise Darby's elevation of Israel above the Church as heresy,²⁹⁶ and to affirm that in some way the Jews could be blessed apart from faith in Jesus Christ was in the words of one of Newton's biographers, 'virtually to say there are two kinds of Christianity, two Gospels, two ways, and two ends of salvation.'²⁹⁷

Another former colleague of Darby, F. W. Newman, describes the effect of his pessimistic dispensational preoccupation with the Second Advent on missionary work: 'The importance of this doctrine is, that it totally forbids all working for earthly objects distant in time.'²⁹⁸ Newman illustrates this with the story of a young man with an aptitude for mathematics who had sought advice of Darby on whether he should pursue the subject. Darby's reply was this: 'such a purpose was very proper, if entertained by a worldly man. Let the dead bury their dead; and let the world study the things of the world... such studies cannot be eagerly followed by the Christian, except when he yields to unbelief.'²⁹⁹ Iain Murray draws out the implications of this world denying

²⁹¹ Charles Ryrie, Dispensationalism, (Moody Press, Chicago, 1995), p. 214; Craig A. Blaising & Darrell L. Bock, ed. Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1992); Progressive Dispensationalism, (Wheaton, Victor, 1993); Robert L. Saucy, The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1993).

²⁹² Fromow, op.cit., pp64-76.

²⁹³ Ibid., p21.

²⁹⁴ Swanson, op.cit., p7.

²⁹⁵ Primarily over their differing Christological views. See Harding, op.cit., pp123ff, although Murray insists 'Tregelles, Newton and others of the early Brethren opposed Darby's insistence on the rapture and this became a major factor in subsequent divisions.' Murray, op.cit., p286.

²⁹⁶ Roy Coad, A History of the Brethren Movement, (Exeter, Paternoster, 1968), p131.

²⁹⁷ Fromow, op.cit., p75.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., p40.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

dispensational attitude, which had come to eclipse the optimism of the Postmillennialism of a century earlier as well as distance itself from Covenant Premillennialists who remained passionately committed to Jewish evangelism and Restorationism. Political and social involvement associated with the Reformation, the Puritans and more recently with William Wilberforce, the Clapham Sect and Lord Shaftesbury were, Murray argues, 'no longer regarded as legitimate political activity':

'The old Puritan teaching allowed both for hope in a mighty spread of the gospel in the earth and for a yearning for Christ's glorious appearing. The new teaching, by reversing the order of these two things, nullified the first hope as far as the experience of the Church on this side of the Advent is concerned, and by making the imminence of the Advent an essential part of what Paul calls 'the blessed hope', it introduced practical effects into the present life of Christians ... a thorough pessimism about the world, and a refusal to take a long-term view of the prospects of the Church in history, came to be regarded as attitudes which were the hall-marks of orthodoxy.'³⁰⁰

This explains the preoccupation with prophecy and prophetic speculation among dispensationalists. An indication of the influence which the Albury and Powerscourt conferences had upon other clergy in the United Kingdom is given by E. B. Elliott, who wrote his own four-volume 2,500-page treatise on the Apocalypse and which went through five editions in 18 years:³⁰¹

'In the year 1844, the date of the first publication of my own work on the Apocalypse, so rapid has been the progress of these views in England, that instead of its appearing a thing strange and half-heretical to hold them, as when Irving published his translation of Ben Ezra, the heaven had evidently now deeply penetrated the religious mind; and from the ineffectiveness of the opposition hitherto formally made to them, they seemed gradually advancing forward to triumph.'³⁰²

Similarly, in 1866, McNeile could also look back to an earlier generation when the views of Irving and the others of the Albury Circle concerning a failing church and Jewish restoration were regarded as an eccentric novelty by those he termed 'anti-restorationists':³⁰³

³⁰⁰ Murray, op.cit., p202.

³⁰¹ E.B. Elliott, Horae Apocalypticæ, A Commentary on the Apocalypse, 4th edn. 4 volumes (1851), cited in Murray, op.cit., p197.

³⁰² Elliott, op.cit., vol. 4, p522.

³⁰³ McNeile, op.cit., p213.

‘When these lectures were first published in 1830, the subject was comparatively new to the Church in this country. It had no place in the battle-field of the Reformation. It had not been discussed by any of the theological lights of the last Century. It was just beginning to be ventilated in consequence of the labours of Mr. Lewis Way and Mr. Hawtrey; and more especially in consequence of the writings of Mr. Faber, and the zealous advocacy of Mr. Simeon.’³⁰⁴

In the second half of the 19th Century, that number increased significantly so that by 1873 a Prophetic Conference held in London had the support of senior evangelical Anglicans such as Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Radstock and the Earl of Cavan.³⁰⁵

4.4 A Summary on the Rise of British Dispensationalism

The family tree of Christian Zionism clearly had its roots deep in the Reformation and Puritan era but its visible origins as a movement lie in the preaching, writings, and missionary endeavours of British evangelical leaders such as Lewis Way, Charles Simeon, Joseph Wolff, Charles Spurgeon, Edward Irving, John Nelson Darby and Benjamin Newton. Two distinct branches emerged, one based on Covenantal Premillennialism emphasising evangelism, the other from Dispensational Premillennialism which stressed Restorationism.

In Britain, Anglicans associated with the London Jews’ Society as well as non-conformists who identified with the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews, continued to promote evangelism and humanitarian work among the Jews of Europe and Palestine as well as work toward their restoration. By 1845, it is estimated that over 700 Anglican clergy now held to a premillennial restorationist eschatology including Edward Bickersteth, secretary of the Church Missionary Society,³⁰⁶ who came to have a dominant influence in Lord Shaftesbury’s life,³⁰⁷ as well as others who were to become Anglican evangelical leaders such as J. C. Ryle, the Bishop of Liverpool. At the same time, with the break up of the ecumenical fellowship at

³⁰⁴ McNeile, op.cit., preface to new edition 1866; see also George Stanley Faber, A Treatise on the Genius and Object of the Patriarchal, the Levitical and the Christian dispensations, (London, F.C & J. Rivington, 1823), 2 vols.

³⁰⁵ Murray, op.cit., p197.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.,

Powerscourt over whether the Church had failed and whether Christians should separate from their denominations, Irving and Darby's influence in Britain waned.

Through Darby's Brethren missionaries, and especially his American visits, however, the seeds of his innovative dispensational Christian Zionism, distinguishing between God's purposes for the Jews and the Church, received increasingly enthusiastic endorsement from contemporaries including W. E. Blackstone, D. L. Moody, James Brooks, Arno C. Gaebelein and Cyrus Scofield. Their influence over these two branches, covenantal premillennial and dispensational premillennial, extended well beyond pulpit and journal and came to impact not only American Fundamentalism but more significantly, British foreign policy in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries and indeed, to inspire the birth of the Jewish Zionist movement itself.

5. Lord Shaftesbury and the Influence of Restorationism upon British Foreign Policy

Zionism would have remained simply a religious ideal were it not for the intervention of a handful of influential aristocratic politicians who came to share the theological convictions of Way, Irving and Darby and translated them into political reality. One in particular, Lord Shaftesbury (1801-1885) became convinced that the restoration of the Jews to Palestine was not only predicted in the Bible,³⁰⁸ but also coincided with the strategic interests of British foreign policy.³⁰⁹ Others who shared this perspective, in varying degrees and for different reasons, included Lord Palmerston, David Lloyd George and Lord Balfour. Ironically, this conviction was precipitated by the actions of an atheist, Napoleon, in the spring of 1799.

During the Syrian campaign of Napoleon's Oriental expedition, in which he had sought to defeat the Ottoman rulers, cut off Britain from its Empire, and recreate the empire of Alexander from France to India,³¹⁰ he

³⁰⁷ Kelvin Crombie, 'Shaftesbury 1801-1885' *Shalom*, 3 (2002), pp16-17.

³⁰⁸ Wagner, op.cit., p91.

³⁰⁹ Barbara Tuchman, *Bible and Sword*, (London, Macmillan, 1982), p115.

³¹⁰ Merkley, op.cit., p38.

become the first political leader to propose a sovereign Jewish State in Palestine:

'Bonaparte, Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the French Republic in Africa and Asia, to the Rightful Heirs of Palestine. Israelites, unique nation, whom, in thousands of years, lust of conquest and tyranny were able to deprive of the ancestral lands only, but not of name and national existence ... She [France] offers to you at this very time, and contrary to all expectations, Israel's patrimony ... Rightful heirs of Palestine ... hasten! Now is the moment which may not return for thousands of years, to claim the restoration of your rights among the population of the universe which had shamefully withheld from you for thousands of years, your political existence as a nation among the nations, and the unlimited natural right to worship Yehovah in accordance with your faith, publicly and in likelihood for ever (Joel 4:20).'³¹¹

Napoleon believed that with sympathetic Jews controlling the territory between Acre, Lower Egypt and the Red Sea, French imperial and commercial interests as far as India, Arabia and Africa could be secured.³¹² Neither Napoleon nor the Jews were able to deliver. Nevertheless his proclamation 'is a barometer of the extent to which the European atmosphere was charged with these messianic expectations.'³¹³ The European Powers became increasingly preoccupied with the 'Eastern Question'. Britain and Prussia sided with the Sultan of Turkey against Napoleon and his vassal, Mehemet Ali. The necessity of preventing French control had led not only to the battles of the Nile and Acre, but also to a British military expedition in Palestine. With the defeat of Napoleon, Britain's main concern was how to restrain Russia which required supporting Turkish sovereignty.³¹⁴ The race was on to control Palestine.³¹⁵

Stirred by memories of the Napoleonic expedition, Shaftesbury argued for a greater British presence in Palestine and saw this could be achieved by

³¹¹ Cited in Franz Kobler, Napoleon and the Jews, (New York, Schocken Books, 1976), pp55-57. See also: http://www.napoleonicsociety.com/english/scholarship98/c_jews98.html

³¹² See Albert M. Hyamson, Palestine: The Rebirth of an Ancient People, (London, Sidgwick & Jackson, 1917), pp162-163; Salo W. Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, (New York, Columbia University Press, 1937), 2. p327, cited in Sharif, op.cit., p52.

³¹³ Baron, *ibid*.

³¹⁴ Sharif, op.cit., p54.

³¹⁵ John Pollock, Shaftesbury, (London, Hodder, 1985), p54.

the sponsorship of a Jewish homeland on both religious and political grounds.³¹⁶ British protection of the Jews, he argued, would give a colonial advantage over France for the control of the Middle East; provide better access to India via a direct land route; and open up new commercial markets for British products.³¹⁷

In 1839, Shaftesbury wrote an anonymous 30 page article for the Quarterly Review, entitled 'State and Restauration (sic) of the Jews.' In it Shaftesbury advocated a Jewish national homeland with Jerusalem the capital, remaining under Turkish rule but with British protection.³¹⁸ Shaftesbury predicted a new era for the Jews in terms similar to those Charles Simeon had used in 1836:

'... the Jews must be encouraged to return in yet greater numbers and become once more the husbandman of Judea and Galilee ... though admittedly a stiff-necked, dark hearted people, and sunk in moral degradation, obduracy, and ignorance of the Gospel ... [They are] ... not only worthy of salvation but also vital to Christianity's hope of salvation.'³¹⁹

Shaftesbury appeared to share Simeon's optimistic postmillennial eschatology, seeing the conversion of the Jews as a means to bringing the whole world to faith before Christ returned.

When Lord Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary, married the widowed mother of Lord Shaftesbury's wife, Ashley was 'well placed' to lobby for this cause.³²⁰ In his diary for 1st August 1840 Shaftesbury wrote:

'Dined with Palmerston. After dinner left alone with him. Propounded my scheme which seems to strike his fancy. He asked questions and readily promised to consider it. How singular is the order of Providence. Singular, if estimated by man's ways. Palmerston had already been chosen by God to be an instrument of good to His ancient people, to do homage to their inheritance, and to recognize their rights without believing their destiny. It seems he will yet do more. Though the motive be kind, it is not sound ... he weeps not, like his

³¹⁶ Lord Shaftesbury, cited in P. C. Merkley, The Politics of Christian Zionism 1891-1948, (London: Frank Cass, 1998), p14.

³¹⁷ Wagner, op.cit., p91.

³¹⁸ Pollock, op.cit., p54.

³¹⁹ Earl of Shaftesbury, 'State and Prospects of the Jews', Quarterly Review, 63, London, January/March (1839), pp166-192, cited in Wagner, op.cit., p91, and http://www.snunit.k12.il/heb_journals/katedra/62018.html

³²⁰ Pollock, op.cit., p54.

Master, over Jerusalem, nor prays that now, at last, she may put on her beautiful garments.³²¹

Although Shaftesbury lamented Palmerston's unbelief, he nevertheless saw him as God's appointed man to bring about the restoration of the Jews. As a first step, Shaftesbury persuaded Palmerston to appoint the fellow restorationist William Young as the first European vice-consul in Jerusalem. He subsequently wrote in his diary, 'What a wonderful event it is! The ancient City of the people of God is about to resume a place among the nations; and England is the first of the Gentile kingdoms that ceases to "tread her down."³²² His gentle lobbying of Palmerston proved successful. Palmerston wrote an important letter to Ponsonby, the British ambassador in Constantinople, dated 11 August 1840. It concerned the mutual benefit to both Turkey and Britain of allowing Jews to return to Palestine. Palmerston argued that the restoration of the Jews would be an important means of maintaining the status quo, and of avoiding the disintegration of the Muslim Ottoman Empire:

'There exists at the present time among the Jews dispersed over Europe, a strong notion that the time is approaching when their nation is to return to Palestine ... It would be of manifest importance to the Sultan to encourage the Jews to return and to settle in Palestine because the wealth which they would bring with them would increase the resources of the Sultan's dominions; and the Jewish people, if returning under the sanction and protection and at the invitation of the Sultan, would be a check upon any future evil designs of Mohamet Ali or his successor ... I have to instruct Your Excellency strongly to recommend [the Turkish government] to hold out every just encouragement to the Jews of Europe to return to Palestine.'³²³

It is not clear on what factual grounds Palmerston based his observations concerning the aspirations of European Jews. Nevertheless, days after Lord Palmerston sent his letter, a lead article in The Times, dated 17 August 1840,

³²¹ Anthony Ashley, Earl of Shaftesbury. Diary entries as quoted by Edwin Hodder, The Life and Work of the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, (London, 1886), 1, pp310-311; See also Geoffrey B.A.M. Finlayson, The Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, (London, Eyre Methuen, 1981), p114; The National Register Archives, London, Shaftesbury (Broadlands) MSS, SHA/PD/2, 1 August 1840.

³²² M.J. Pragai, Faith and Fulfilment, Christians and the Return to the Promised Land, (London, Vallentine, Mitchell, 1985), p45.

called for a plan 'to plant the Jewish people in the land of their fathers', claiming such a plan was under 'serious political consideration'. Palmerston commended the efforts of Shaftesbury, the plan's author as both 'practical and statesmanlike'. Fuelling speculation about an imminent restoration, on 4 November of 1840, Shaftesbury took out a paid advertisement in The Times to give greater visibility to his vision. The advertisement included the following:

'RESTORATION OF THE JEWS. A memorandum has been addressed to the Protestant monarchs of Europe on the subject of the restoration of the Jewish people to the land of Palestine. The document in question, dictated by a peculiar conjunction of affairs in the East, and other striking "signs of the times", reverts to the original covenant which secures that land to the descendants of Abraham.'³²⁴

Lewis Way had made such an appeal at the Congress of Aix la Chapelle in 1818. Now it was being revived on the grounds of political expediency and biblical mandate. Having helped achieve the former by securing the appointment of Young as Consul in Jerusalem, Shaftesbury now turned to the latter and advocated the founding of an Anglican bishopric in Jerusalem. This would, he argued, be a means by which God would continue to bless England as well as facilitate the return of the Jewish people to Palestine. The Bishopric would, he said, be both, 'political and religious ... a combination of Protestant thrones, bound by temporal interests and eternal principles, to plant under the banner of the Cross, God's people on the mountains of Jerusalem.'³²⁵ At the beginning of the 19th Century, the only representatives of Western Christianity in Jerusalem had been the Franciscans and only the Orthodox and Armenian traditions were resident in significant numbers. A Protestant bishopric under joint British and Prussian auspices was founded in 1841 and an Anglican church, Christ Church, near the Jaffa Gate in the Old City, was dedicated in 1845. Despite great expectations, Solomon Alexander, the first bishop and a former Jewish rabbi, did not survive long in the post. He was succeeded by

³²³ Palmerston to Ponsonby, Public Record Office, FO. 195/165, (no. 261) 25 November 1840. cited in Tuchman, *op.cit.*, p175; and Sharif, *op.cit.*, pp58-59.

³²⁴ Wagner, *op.cit.*, p91.

³²⁵ Merkley, *op.cit.*, p14.

Samuel Gobat, a Swiss Lutheran. The arrangement with Germany then lapsed and the bishopric became solely Anglican from 1881.³²⁶

Having secured a sympathetic British Consul as well as an Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, the next step in the restorationist agenda was to survey and map Palestine. To this end, Shaftesbury became the founding President of the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF) in 1865. In his inaugural speech at the launch of the PEF he openly declared their motives. 'Let us not delay to send out the best agents ... to search the length and breadth of Palestine, to survey the land, and if possible to go over every corner of it, drain it, measure it and, if you will, prepare it for the return of its ancient possessors, for I believe that the time cannot be far off before that great event will come to pass.'³²⁷

The influence of Lord Shaftesbury, therefore, in promoting the Zionist cause within the political, diplomatic, and ecclesiastical establishment in Britain was immense. Wagner claims, 'He single-handedly translated the theological positions of Brightman, Henry Finch, and John Nelson Darby into a political strategy. His high political connections, matched by his uncanny instincts, combined to advance the Christian Zionist vision.'³²⁸ Indeed it was probably Shaftesbury who inspired Israel Zangwell and Theodore Herzl to coin the phrase, 'A land of no people for a people with no land.' Shaftesbury, a generation earlier, imagining Palestine to be empty, had come up with the slogan, 'A country without a nation for a nation without a country.'³²⁹ Shaftesbury had probably adapted the phrase of his colleague in the PEF, James Finn, who in 1857, while British Consul in Jerusalem, had reported, 'The country is in a considerable degree empty of inhabitants and therefore its greatest need is that of a body of population.'³³⁰

³²⁶ Anthony O'Mahony, 'Christianity in the Holy Land, The historical background', The Month, December (1993), p470.

³²⁷ Cited by Derek White, Christian Friends of Israel, <http://www.cfi.org.uk/chrzion1.htm>

³²⁸ Wagner, op.cit., p92.

³²⁹ cited in Wagner, op.cit., p92; also Albert H. Hyamson, Palestine under the Mandate, (London, 1950), p10, cited in Sharif, op.cit., p42.

³³⁰ James Finn to the Earl of Clarendon, Jerusalem, September 15, 1857, Public Record Office, FO, 78/1294 (Pol. No. 36). Finn wrote further, that, 'The result of my observations is, that we have here Jews, who have been to the United States, but have returned to their Holy Land -Jews of Jerusalem do go to Australia and instead of remaining there, do return hither,

Like Moses, Shaftesbury did not live to see his 'Promised Land' realised. However, through his lobbying, writings and public speaking he did more than any other British politician to inspire a generation of Joshuas to translate his religious vision into a political reality.

6. British Christian Political Support for the Jewish Zionist Movement

Of those Christian political leaders to take up the mantle of Shaftesbury and achieve the Zionist dream, a small number stand out. These include Laurence Oliphant (1829-1888), William Hechler (1845-1931), David Lloyd George (1863-1945) and probably most significant of all, Arthur Balfour (1848-1930). Unlike many other Zionists, Laurence Oliphant actually visited Palestine to survey the land and explore prospects for its agricultural colonisation. In 1880, Oliphant published a book entitled The Land of Gilead, in which he reiterated the Zionist case, proposing a detailed settlement scheme east of the Jordan under British protection while acknowledging Turkish sovereignty. Conveniently, Oliphant too recognised the convergence of absolute religious dogmatism and pragmatic political expediency:

'It remains for England to decide whether she will undertake the task of exploring its ruined cities, of developing its vast agricultural resources, by means of the repatriation of that race which first entered into its possession, 3000 years ago and of securing the great political advantages which must accrue from such a policy.'³³¹

Oliphant also urged the British Parliament to assist the emigration of Jews to Palestine from Russia and Eastern Europe. Controversially, he recommended that the 'warlike' Bedouins be driven out, while the more passive Palestinians be moved onto reservations along the lines of the native Indians in North America.³³²

By 1897, when the first World Zionist Congress met in Basle, Switzerland, Jewish leaders who favoured a Zionist State already had sympathetic support from many more senior British political figures. This was largely due to the efforts of one man, William Hechler. The son of LJS

even without the allurements of agriculture and its concomitants.' cited in <http://www.eretzisrael.org/~peters/depopulated.html#18>

³³¹ Tuchman, op.cit., p173.

³³² Sharif, op.cit., p68.

missionaries in France and Germany, Hechler was an Anglican priest and became chaplain to the British Embassy in Vienna in 1885, a position of strategic significance for the Zionist movement.³³³ According to Sharif, 'Imbued with evangelical millenarianism, he even formulated his own exact date for the re-establishment of the Jewish State.'³³⁴ As with Shaftesbury's slogan, so Hechler's booklet, The Restoration of the Jews to Palestine (1894), predated Herzl's Der Judenstaat by two years, and spoke of the need for 'restoring the Jews to Palestine according to Old Testament prophecies.'³³⁵ Hechler became Herzl's chief Christian ally in realising his vision of a Zionist State, one of only three Christians invited to attend the World Congress of Zionists. Herzl was not religious but he was superstitious and records a meeting with Hechler on 10 March 1896 in his diary:

'The Reverend William Hechler, Chaplain of the English Embassy here, came to see me. A sympathetic, gentle fellow, with the long grey beard of a prophet. He is enthusiastic about my solution of the Jewish Question. He also considers my movement a 'prophetic turning-point' - which he had foretold two years before. From a prophecy in the time of Omar (637CE) he had reckoned that at the end of forty-two prophetic months (total 1260 years) the Jews would get Palestine back. This figure he arrived at was 1897-98.'³³⁶

In March 1897, the year Hechler expected the Jews to begin returning to Palestine, Herzl described their second meeting at Hechler's apartment. Herzl was amazed to find books from floor to ceiling, 'Nothing but Bibles' and a large military staff map of Palestine made up of four sheets covering the entire floor of the study:

'He showed me where, according to his calculations, our new Temple must be located: in Bethel! Because that is the centre of the country. He also showed me models of the ancient Temple. 'We have prepared the ground for you!' Hechler said triumphantly ... I take him for a naive visionary ... However, there is something charming about his enthusiasm ... He gives me excellent advice, full of unmistakable genuine good will. He is at once clever and mystical, cunning and naive.'³³⁷

³³³ David Pileggi, 'Hechler, CMJ & Zionism' Shalom, 3 (1998).

³³⁴ Sharif, op.cit., p71.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Theodor Herzl, The Diaries of Theodor Herzl, (New York, 1956), cited in Sharif, op.cit., p71.

³³⁷ Merkley, op.cit., pp16-17; Pileggi, op.cit.

Despite Herzl's initial scepticism, Hechler kept his word and gained access to the German Kaiser William II, the Grand Duke of Baden as well as the British political establishment for Herzl and his Zionist delegation. Although sympathetic to the evangelistic ministry of the LJS, Hechler's advocacy and diplomacy marked a radical shift in Christian Zionist thinking away from the views of Way and Simeon who saw restoration to the land as a consequence of Jewish conversion to Christianity. Now, Hechler was insisting instead, that it was the destiny of Christians simply to help restore the Jews to Palestine. This is clear in a letter he wrote to a missionary in Jerusalem in 1898:

'Of course, dear colleague, you look for the conversion of the Jews, but the times are changing rapidly, and it is important for us to look further and higher. We are now entering, thanks to the Zionist Movement, into Israel's Messianic age. Thus, it is not a matter these days of opening all the doors of your churches to the Jews, but rather of opening the gates of their homeland, and of sustaining them in their work of clearing the land, and irrigating it and bringing water to it. All of this, dear colleague, is messianic work; all of this the breath of the Holy Spirit announces. But first the dry bones must come to life, and draw together.'³³⁸

Hechler's arguments appear to prefigure those of contemporary dispensational Christian Zionists who, having disavowed evangelism, fulfil their Christian mandate by bringing blessing to Israel. When Hechler eventually resigned from his chaplaincy in Vienna in 1910, the Zionist Organisation in London provided a pension, for his 'loyal' support of Zionism, in accordance with Herzl's instructions. In 1922 Hechler was present when the British Parliament ratified the Palestine Mandate, convinced this event was itself, if somewhat belated, the fulfilment of Biblical prophecy.³³⁹

David Lloyd George, who became Prime Minister in 1916, was another self-confessed Zionist, sharing similar views to those of Shaftesbury. In his own words, he was Chaim Weizmann's proselyte, 'Acetone converted me to Zionism.'³⁴⁰ Weizmann had assisted the British government in the development of explosives and, in part, Palestine appears to have been the

³³⁸ Merkley, op.cit., p16.

³³⁹ Pileggi, op.cit.

³⁴⁰ Weizmann had discovered how to synthesize acetone, a solvent used in the manufacture of explosives.

reward. In the same speech given before the Jewish Historical Society in 1925, Lloyd George reminisced on his inherited non-conformist conscience:

'I was brought up in a school where I was taught far more about the history of the Jews than about the history of my own land. I could tell you all the kings of Israel. But I doubt whether I could have named half a dozen of the kings of England, and not more of the kings of Wales ... We were thoroughly imbued with the history of your race in the days of its greatest glory, when it founded that great literature which will echo to the very last days of this old world, influencing, moulding, fashioning human character, inspiring and sustaining human motive, for not only Jews, but Gentiles as well. We absorbed it and made it part of the best in the Gentile character.'³⁴¹

Christopher Sykes, (the son of Sir Mark Sykes, who co-authored the secret Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, which dismembered the Ottoman Empire dividing it between Britain, France and Russia) was also one of Lloyd George's biographers.³⁴² Sykes wrote that prior to the Paris Peace Accords, signed in 1919, various advisors had tried unsuccessfully to brief Lloyd George on the issues relating to the Palestine settlement but that he was not able to grasp the issues, 'largely because he could not move beyond the Christian Zionist worldview of his youth. When briefed repeatedly on the contemporary geography of Palestine, Lloyd George insisted on reciting from his memory of childhood Sunday school lessons the Biblical cities and lands of Bible times, some of which no longer existed.'³⁴³ Oliphant, Hechler and Lloyd George all nurtured the fledgling Jewish Zionist movement, in part from religious conviction but also because it served the purposes of British foreign policy. It is ironic that the Jewish Zionist movement led by Herzl was essentially secular, and yet it relied on Christian Zionists such as William Hechler who had a deep reverence for the Hebrew scriptures and a passionate certainty that Eretz Israel was the Jewish destiny.

³⁴¹ Philip Guedalla, Napoleon and Palestine, (London, 1925), pp45-55, cited in Sharif, op.cit., p79.

³⁴² Christopher Sykes, Cross Roads to Israel, Palestine from Balfour to Bevin, (London, Collins, 1965).

³⁴³ Wagner, op.cit., pp94-95.

7. The Balfour Declaration and the Implementation of the Zionist Vision

Probably the most significant British politician of all, however, was Arthur James Balfour (1848-1930), who pioneered the Balfour Declaration in 1917. Like Lloyd George, Balfour had been brought up in an evangelical home and was sympathetic to Zionism because of the influence of dispensational teaching.³⁴⁴ He regarded history as 'an instrument for carrying out a Divine purpose.'³⁴⁵ From 1905 Chaim Weizmann, then a professor of chemistry at Manchester University, began to meet regularly with Balfour to discuss the implementation of that goal. Following a meeting with Weizmann on 9th January 1906, Balfour wrote to his wife saying that he could see, 'no political difficulty about obtaining Palestine, only economic ones.'³⁴⁶ Weizmann convinced Balfour that none of the other Jewish homeland 'solutions' such as Uganda or Argentina were tenable. According to his niece, Balfour remarked shortly before his death that, '... the Jewish form of patriotism was unique ... Their love of their country refused to be satisfied by the Uganda scheme. It was Weizmann's absolute refusal even to look at it that impressed me.'³⁴⁷

Negotiations over a British declaration of support for the Zionists began in early 1917 between Lord Balfour, (then British Foreign Secretary), other members of the British government and with representatives of the Zionist Organisation. Mark Sykes, (the Assistant Secretary to the War Cabinet), had been given responsibility for Middle Eastern Affairs and set about extricating the British from the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916 which envisaged Anglo-French administration of Palestine. In October 1917, Balfour learned that Germany was about to issue its own declaration of sympathy with Zionism and therefore recommended that the British Cabinet pre-empt them.³⁴⁸ At Balfour's invitation, in July 1917, the Zionist Organisation offered a suggested draft to Balfour:

- '1. His Majesty's Government accepts the principle that Palestine should be reconstituted as the National Home of the Jewish people.
2. His Majesty's Government will use its best endeavours to secure the

³⁴⁴ Wagner, op.cit., p93.

³⁴⁵ Sharif, op.cit., p78

³⁴⁶ Kenneth Young, Arthur James Balfour (London, G. Bell & Sons, 1963), p256.

³⁴⁷ Ibid., p256.

³⁴⁸ World Zionist Organisation, <http://www.wzo.org.il/home/politic/balfour.htm>

achievement of this object and will discuss the necessary methods and means with the Zionist Organization.³⁴⁹

Balfour amended this in August to emphasize the prerogative of the British government: '... and will use its best endeavours to secure the achievement of this object and will be ready to consider any suggestions on the subject which the Zionist Organization may desire to lay before it.' At the insistence of Edwin Montagu, Secretary of State for India and an anti-Zionist Jew, a clause was added to guarantee the status of British Jews, in particular, who did not wish to live in Palestine, since most opposed Zionism.³⁵⁰ Several further drafts were written before the final version was agreed by the Cabinet. On the 2nd November 1917, Lord Balfour made public the final draft of the letter written to Lord Rothschild on the 31st October which became known as the Balfour Declaration:

'His Majesty's Government views with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of that object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done, which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish Communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.'³⁵¹

Not only had the Zionist Organisation offered an initial draft to Balfour but the British government's response was also drafted by a Jew - Leopold Amery. Amery was a covert Jew whose mother Elisabeth Joanna Saphir was Hungarian. Amery had changed his middle name from Moritz to Maurice in order to disguise his origins. As Assistant Secretary to the British War Cabinet, Amery not only wrote the final version of the Balfour Declaration, but was also responsible for establishing the Jewish Legion, the first organised Jewish army for 2,000 years and forerunner to the Israeli Defence Force. According to William Rubinstein, Amery misled British officials as to his sympathy for the Jews. Indeed, he claims Amery's deception was 'possibly the most remarkable example of concealment of identity in 20th Century

³⁴⁹ D. Ingrams, Palestine Papers 1917-1922, Seeds of Conflict, (London, John Murray, 1972), p9.

³⁵⁰ Ingrams, op.cit., p11.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

British political history.³⁵² Balfour was in fact already committed to the Zionist programme out of theological conviction and had no intention of consulting with the indigenous Arab population. In a letter to Lord Curzon, written in 1919, Balfour insisted somewhat cynically:

‘For in Palestine we do not propose even to go through the form of consulting the wishes of the present inhabitants of the country ...the Four Great Powers are committed to Zionism. And Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long traditions, in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires or prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land ... I do not think that Zionism will hurt the Arabs ... in short, so far as Palestine is concerned, the Powers have made no statement of fact which is not admittedly wrong, and no declaration of policy which, at least in the letter, they have not always intended to violate.’³⁵³

What the Balfour Declaration left intentionally ambiguous was the meaning of a ‘national home’. Balfour’s draft of August 1917 read ‘Palestine should be reconstituted as the national home of the Jewish people.’ In the final version in October ‘the’ had become ‘a’ and it now read, ‘the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.’ Was this synonymous with sovereignty or statehood and if so what were to be the borders? Would it occupy all of Palestine or just a portion? What was to be the status of Jerusalem? Furthermore, while it stated that ‘the civil and religious rights of the existing population’ were to be safeguarded and the territory was designated ‘Palestine’, there was no reference to Palestinians. ‘They were an actual, but awkward non-identity.’³⁵⁴ It was clearly Balfour’s opinion that ‘the present inhabitants’ need not be consulted, either before or after.³⁵⁵ That 90% of the population of Palestine were Arabs of whom around 10% were Christian seemed irrelevant to the politicians and Zionists who had another agenda.³⁵⁶ So the awkward questions were left unanswered and it is these

³⁵² William Rubinstein, History Today, 49, 2 February (1999), pp17-23.

³⁵³ Ingrams, op.cit., p73.

³⁵⁴ Kenneth Cragg, The Arab Christian, A History in the Middle East, (London, Mowbray, 1992), p234.

³⁵⁵ Edward W. Said, The Question of Palestine, revised edition, (London, Vintage, 1992), p19.

³⁵⁶ A report to the British Foreign Office in December 1918 revealed that Palestine consisted of 512,000 Muslims, 61,000 Christians and 66,000 Jews. Ingrams, op.cit., p44.

ambiguities which have plagued Middle East peace negotiations and divided Christians ever since.

This momentous declaration gave Zionism for the first time a measure of 'political legitimacy' and provided the impetus for the colonization of Palestine.³⁵⁷ In a speech made at the London Opera House celebration of the Balfour Declaration on 2nd December 1917, Lord Robert Cecil claimed that it marked not the birth of a nation but, '... the rebirth of a nation ... I believe it will have far-flung influence on the history of the world and consequences that none can foresee on the future history of the human race.'³⁵⁸ Just a week later, on the 9th December 1917, British troops occupied Jerusalem. Anglo-French diplomacy and strategic self-interest in the possession of territory gained from the Turks led to duplicity over the Balfour Declaration in promising the same land to both the Jews and Arabs.

Thus Lord Balfour and David Lloyd George, probably two of the most influential British political leaders of the First World War years, like Shaftesbury and Palmerston a generation earlier, were both committed to a Christian Zionist agenda. Their support for the World Zionist Movement was a direct result of their evangelical upbringing and the influence of clergy like Way, Simeon and Darby, as much as from their desire to dismember the Ottoman Empire and ensure British dominance in the Middle East.

From the mid 19th Century, a similar marriage between religious dogmatism and political expediency in the United States was to lead theologians and politicians alike to support the Zionist cause. However, while Dispensationalism became marginalized in Britain, limited to the sectarianism of the Brethren, in the United States it was to become a dominant influence within mainstream Evangelicalism. Ironically, through the popular 'End Times' fictional writing of Tim LaHaye, American Dispensationalism has begun to penetrate the British evangelical scene once more.³⁵⁹ In the mid 19th Century, the link between British and American dispensational Christian Zionism was first brokered by John Nelson Darby.

³⁵⁷ Wagner, op.cit., p94

³⁵⁸ Tuchman, op.cit., p340.

³⁵⁹ For a critique of Tim LaHaye's 'Left Behind' series see John Noe, Shattering the 'Left Behind' Delusion, (Bradford, Pennsylvania, International Preterist Association, 2000).

8. Dispensationalism and the Birth of Christian Zionism in America (1859-1945)

During the Colonial period and even beyond the Civil War (1861-1865), American Christianity, as in Britain at the beginning of the 19th Century, was essentially postmillennial in outlook. Strengthened by the Wesleyan Holiness movement,³⁶⁰ there was a strong focus on evangelism, personal morality and civil responsibility.³⁶¹ The Revolutionary War provided a stimulus to popular apocalyptic speculation and by 1773, King George III was being portrayed as the Antichrist and the war a 'holy crusade' that would usher in the millennium.³⁶² In parallel with Britain, the late 18th and early 19th Century also saw an explosion of millennial sects including the Shakers, Mormons and Millerites. Influenced by the French Revolution and the destruction of the Papacy in France, historic Premillennialism gradually became more popular. While these sects may have been influenced by European premillennial ideas, their views of Israel were entirely different. Joseph Smith of the Mormons, for example, insisted, 'We believe in the literal gathering of Israel, and the restoration of the Ten Tribes: Zion will be built upon this continent', that is, America.³⁶³ Similarly, in William Miller's predictions there is no mention of the conversion of the Jews or their restoration to Palestine.³⁶⁴

Between 1859 and 1872, resulting from his extensive tours throughout America, and reinforced by the trauma of the Civil War, Darby's premillennial dispensational views about a 'failing' Church and revived Israel came to have a profound and increasing influence upon American Evangelicalism. It resulted not only in the birth of American Dispensationalism³⁶⁵ but also influenced the Millenarianism associated with the Prophecy Conference Movement, as well as later, Fundamentalism.³⁶⁶ Kyle suggests Darby's

³⁶⁰ Timothy L. Smith, 'Righteousness and Hope: Christian Holiness and the Millennial Vision in America, 1800-1900,' American Quarterly, 31.1 (Spring 1979).

³⁶¹ Richard Kyle, The Last Days are Here Again, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker, 1998), pp77-98.

³⁶² Ibid. p81.

³⁶³ J. F. C. Harrison, The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism, 1780-1850, (New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1979), p180.

³⁶⁴ Kyle, op.cit., p88.

³⁶⁵ Charles Caldwell Ryrie, Dispensationalism Today, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1966).

³⁶⁶ Ernest R. Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism,

influence on end-time thinking was 'perhaps more than that of anyone else in the last two centuries.'³⁶⁷ In the absence of a strong Jewish Zionist movement, American Christian Zionism arose from the confluence of these complex associations, evangelical, premillennial, dispensational, millenarian, and proto-fundamentalist.³⁶⁸ Those most closely influenced by and associated with Darby who also contributed to the development of Christian Zionism in America were James Brookes, Arno Gaebelein, D. L. Moody, William E. Blackstone and C. I. Scofield.³⁶⁹

8.1 James H. Brookes : Restoration to Zion (1830-1897)

James H. Brookes, the minister of Walnut Street Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, Missouri, has been described as 'The father of American Dispensationalism'³⁷⁰ as well as an important leader in the proto-fundamentalist movement.³⁷¹ Brookes not only sympathised with J. N. Darby's dispensational views of a failing Church, corrupt and beyond hope, but also met Darby during five visits he made to St Louis between 1864-1865.³⁷² They also met again between 1872-1877 when Darby preached in Brookes' church.³⁷³ In the summer of 1872 Darby wrote a letter describing the fruitfulness of his initial visit to St. Louis: '... good opportunities and I am in pretty full intercourse with those exercised, among whom are more than one official minister.'³⁷⁴ While American evangelicals were less inclined to accept Darby's notion of a 'failing church' and remained committed to their own denominations, they did nevertheless endorse his futurist Premillennialism

1800-1930, (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1970); Reuben Archer Torrey, The Fundamental Doctrines of the Christian Faith, (New York, Doren, 1918); The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth, (Chicago, Testimony Publishing Co., 1910-1915).

³⁶⁷ Kyle, op.cit., p104.

³⁶⁸ David Rausch, Zionism within Early American Fundamentalism 1878-1918, a Convergence of Two Traditions, (New York, Edwin Mellen, 1979), p2.

³⁶⁹ Wagner, op.cit., p89.

³⁷⁰ John Gerstner, Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth, (Brentwood, Tennessee, Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1991), p38.

³⁷¹ Rausch, op.cit., p216.

³⁷² Ernest Reisinger, 'A History of Dispensationalism in America' <http://wwwFOUNDERS.org/FJ09/article1.html>

³⁷³ Sandeen, op.cit., pp74-75.

³⁷⁴ J. N. Darby, Letters of J. N. Darby (London, Morish Co., n.d.), Vol .2, p180.

and distinction between the Church and Israel. Mindful though of the notoriety with which the Brethren, and in particular Darby, were regarded within traditional denominational circles, Brookes insisted, ironically like Darby, that he had reached his particular premillennial views through his own study of the Scriptures and not from any one else.³⁷⁵

Brookes was nevertheless instrumental in bringing D. L. Moody to St. Louis for the 1879-1880 campaign and for introducing Scofield, and probably also Darby, to D. L. Moody.³⁷⁶ Brookes became the most influential lobbyist for Dispensationalism for several reasons. Through his Bible classes, he was responsible for nurturing several young Christian leaders, notably Cyrus Scofield who became his close friend and disciple. He also published many books and pamphlets including a Christian magazine called The Truth for 23 years from 1874 until his death. Probably even more significant, however, Brookes helped organise the New York Prophecy Conference of 1878 and served as the principal speaker and President of the annual Niagara Bible Conference from 1878 until his death in 1897.³⁷⁷ He was also pivotal in ensuring that the futurist dispensational views associated with the Albury and Powerscourt conferences in England and Ireland came to take root in Middle America, being deeply committed to the restoration of the Jews to Palestine. In his magazine, The Truth, he promoted the views of Rev. A.C. Tris who raised the question, 'Is Israel a Nation? Or a Sect?' 'If Israel is a nation its restoration to the land of their fathers may be expected; but if it is a sect, it has ceased to exist as a nation, and can only claim a temporal existence

³⁷⁵ James Brookes, 'How I became a pre-millennialist', <http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/proph/brookes.htm>; Oswald T. Allis, Prophecy and the Church (Philadelphia, Presbyterian and Reformed, 1945), p133. Brookes also claimed that his dispensational scheme followed the views of Professor Bayne of McGill University. James H. Brookes, Maranatha; or the Lord Cometh, 10th edition, (New York, 1889), p285.

³⁷⁶ It is known that one of Darby's colleagues, Henry Moorehouse, had a personal influence on Moody. See William R. Moody, The Life of Dwight L. Moody, (Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Sword for the Lord, 1900), p140. W. G. Turner records an occasion when Darby is less than complimentary of Moody. "That he could be ungracious and scathing in his criticism is evident in the incident where, when the great evangelist Dwight L. Moody failed to grasp a point, Darby turned to a bystander and remarked, 'I am here to supply exposition not brains.'" W. G. Turner John Nelson Darby (London, Chapter Two, 1901, 1986), p21.

³⁷⁷ Rausch, op.cit., p216; Gerstner, op.cit., pp39-40.

among other religious sects on the globe.³⁷⁸ Through biblical analysis and historical corroboration, Tris insisted the Jewish people were a 'scattered nation', 'Scattered over the world ... like a spider's web mysteriously interwoven with the nations by golden threads, and closely identified with the very sentiments of our own hearts.'³⁷⁹ Following Darby's dispensational distinction between Israel and the Church, Brookes went on to write, Israel and the Church. In it, he challenged the notion that God's purpose was for Jews to be converted and incorporated in the Church, an approach he insisted history had shown to have largely failed. Furthermore, he insisted, Old Testament promises concerning Israel could not be spiritualised nor had they been fulfilled in the Church.³⁸⁰ Interestingly, the book was published by D.L. Moody's publishing company.

In 1891 Brookes wrote Till He Come, in which he presented a futurist premillennial scheme through which 'the Jews will be literally restored to their land.'³⁸¹ In his journal, The Truth, he urged Christians to show love and compassion toward the Jews, referring to the pogroms of Russia and Romania and restrictions placed upon them in Germany. He called upon Christians to support the return of Jews to Palestine and repudiated the anti-Semitism prevalent in Europe and in America.³⁸² 'All Jews, except those who have become utter infidels, confidently expect to be restored to the land of their fathers, and it is most important to show them that their hope is founded upon Jehovah's immutable covenant, and that it shall be fulfilled by the coming of Messiah.'³⁸³ Committed to not only a literal return to the Land but also a literal return to the Lord, Brookes supported independent missionary work among the Jewish people, notably with Arno C. Gaebelein and Ernst Stroeter who founded the Hope of Israel Mission in Chicago in 1894.³⁸⁴

³⁷⁸ Rausch, op.cit., p217.

³⁷⁹ Ibid., pp217-218.

³⁸⁰ James H. Brookes, Israel and the Church, (Chicago, The Bible Institute Colportage Association, n.d.).

³⁸¹ James H. Brookes, Till He Come, 2nd edition (New York, Fleming H. Revell, 1895), pp1-2.

³⁸² Rausch, op.cit., p223.

³⁸³ James H. Brookes, 'How to Reach the Jews' The Truth, pp135-136, cited in Rausch, op.cit., p224.

³⁸⁴ Arno C. Gaebelein also became Cyrus Scofield's biographer.

8.2 Dwight L. Moody : Respectability for Zionism (1837-1899)

D. L. Moody was first and foremost an evangelist and therefore shared with Brookes a passion to reach the Jews for Christ. However, his theology was not particularly systematic and he came to share the dispensational premillennial presuppositions of those who became his friends and confidants.³⁸⁵ Darby's influence over D. L. Moody came about principally through one of Darby's disciples, a young evangelist called Henry Moorehouse who impressed Moody with his 'extraordinary' preaching. According to his son, Moody's message and style were revolutionised by Moorehouse. 'Mr Moorehouse taught Moody to draw his sword full length, to fling the scabbard away, and to enter the battle with the naked blade.'³⁸⁶ Albert Newman confirms the strong influence Darby had over Moody's circle. 'The large class of evangelists, of whom Dwight L. Moody was the most eminent, have drawn their inspiration and their Scripture interpretation largely from the writings and the personal influence of the Brethren.'³⁸⁷ Arno Gaebelein, Scofield's biographer, also describes how Scofield kept Moody conformed to a dispensational prophetic framework, 'Moody himself needed at times a better knowledge of prophecy, and Scofield was the man to lead him into it.'³⁸⁸

There are several references in Moody's writings that indicate his sympathy for the Jewish people and Restorationism. In a sermon entitled, 'Christ in the Old Testament' delivered in Boston in 1877, Moody explored the meaning of God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 22 to make him a great nation:

'Now, let me ask you, hasn't that prophecy been fulfilled? Hasn't God made that a great and mighty nation? Where is there any nation that has ever produced such men as have come from the seed of Abraham? There is no nation that has or can produce such men ... That promise was made 4000 years ago, and even now you can see that the Jews are a separate and distinct nation, in their language, in their habits and in every respect. You can bring almost every nation

³⁸⁵ Kyle, op.cit., p104; Rausch, op.cit., p155.

³⁸⁶ Moody, op.cit., p140.

³⁸⁷ Albert Henry Newman, Manual of Church History Volume 2, Modern Church History 1517-1902, (Philadelphia: American Baptist Society, 1904), p713.

³⁸⁸ Arno C. Gaebelein, The History of the Scofield Reference Bible, (Spokane, WA, Living Words Foundation, 1991), p25.

here and in fifty years they will become extinct, merged into another, but bring a Jew here, and in fifty years, a hundred years, or a thousand years, he is still a Jew. When I meet a Jew I can't help having a profound respect for them, for they are God's people.'³⁸⁹

Moody clearly did not believe this promise had been fulfilled in the Church. For Moody the Jews remained God's chosen people. In the same sermon, he gave evidence of his dispensational conviction, that the Jews will be converted at the return of Christ and a separate people apart from the Church. 'I have an idea that they are a nation that are to be born in a day, and when they are converted and brought back to Christ, what a mighty power they will be in the land, what missionaries to carry the glad tidings around the world.'³⁹⁰ Moody did, however, distance himself from those who speculated that specific signs had to be fulfilled before Christ's return. On one occasion he preached, 'Now there is no place in the Scripture where we are told to watch for signs – the rebuilding of Babylon, or the returning of the Jews to Jerusalem; but all through Scripture we are told what to do – just to watch for Him; just to be waiting for our Lord's return from Heaven.'³⁹¹ Moody also taught a love for the Jewish people. 'If we love the seed of Abraham ... we shall joyfully welcome the hope of Christ's coming', and remained convinced God had not broken or superseded his covenant with Abraham or Moses.³⁹²

Moody's name is particularly associated with the popular Northfield Conferences which he founded in 1880.³⁹³ Sandeen observes that none of Moody's biographers have noted how at these conferences dispensational speakers dominated the platform especially in the 1880s and 1890s.³⁹⁴

³⁸⁹ D. L. Moody, To All People: Comprising Sermons, Bible Readings, Temperance Addresses, and Prayer-Meeting Talks, (Boston, The Globe Publishing Company, 1877), p354, cited in Rausch, op.cit., p155.

³⁹⁰ Ibid. In another talk given at the Northfield Bible Conference, Moody was more emphatic, 'When Christ returns ... they will reply "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord"', and the Jews will then be that nation that shall be born in a day.' Northfield Echoes III (1896), p281, cited in Rausch. p157.

³⁹¹ Moody, op.cit., p508, cited in Rausch, op.cit., p155.

³⁹² D.L. Moody, The Home Work of D.L. Moody: The School for Young Men, the College for Young Ladies, the Summer School for Bible Teaching, together with Mr. Moody's Pointed, Practical and Helpful Talks (New York, Fleming H. Revell, 1886), p67; cited in Rausch, op.cit., p158.

³⁹³ Gerstner, op.cit., p45.

³⁹⁴ Ernest R. Sandeen, 'Towards a Historical Interpretation of the Origins of Fundamentalism', Church History 36 (1967), p76.

Moody's greatest service to Darby and Dispensationalism, however, came through the Bible Institute for Home and Foreign Missions of the Chicago Evangelization Society, which he founded in 1886. The Moody Bible Institute, as it was later renamed, became the 'West Point' of the Fundamentalist movement giving respectability to Dispensationalism and training many of its future leaders.³⁹⁵ Rausch highlights the fact that many of the dispensational prophecy conference speakers were also regular instructors at the Moody Bible Institute (MBI).³⁹⁶ These included Dr W.G. Moorehead of Xenia, Ohio, who also became one of the consulting editors for the Scofield Reference Bible. The MBI became a prototype for many other colleges and institutions, the most prominent of which were the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (Biola), and the Northwestern Bible Training School of Minneapolis, that facilitated the spread of dispensational theology across America.³⁹⁷ By 1956, forty-one other Bible schools were teaching Dispensationalism and between them training 10,000 pastors and missionaries annually.³⁹⁸

8.3 William Eugene Blackstone: Recognition of Zionism (1841-1935)

Another of John Nelson Darby's disciples and a friend of James Brookes was William E. Blackstone, an influential evangelist and lay worker for the Methodist Episcopal Church, as well as a financier and benefactor.³⁹⁹ After the Civil War he married and settled in Chicago. On the advice of Brookes, in 1887 he wrote a book on biblical prophecy entitled Jesus is Coming, which by 1916, had been translated into twenty-five languages,⁴⁰⁰ and by 1927 into thirty-six. The book took a premillennial dispensational view of the Second Coming, emphasizing that the Jews had a biblical right to Palestine and would soon be restored there. In this Blackstone was one of the first Christian

³⁹⁵ Rausch, op.cit., p153.

³⁹⁶ Rausch, op.cit., p159.

³⁹⁷ Ian S. Rennie, 'Nineteenth-Century Roots', in Handbook of Biblical Prophecy, edited by Carl E. Armerding and W. Ward Gasque (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1977), p57.

³⁹⁸ Gerstner, op.cit., p51.

³⁹⁹ Beth M. Lindberg, A God-Filled Life: The Story of William E. Blackstone, (Chicago The American Messianic Fellowship, n.d.).

⁴⁰⁰ William E. Blackstone, Jesus is Coming, 3rd edition (Chicago, Fleming Revell, 1916).

Zionists in America, like Hechler in Britain, to actively lobby for the Zionist cause. Blackstone took the Zionist movement to be a 'sign' of the imminent return of Christ even though its leadership like Herzl were agnostic. Like Gaebelein, he could distinguish between the worldly means and divine ends:

'The Zionists have seized the reins and eschewing the help of Abraham's God they have accepted agnostics as leaders and are plunging madly into this scheme for the erection of a godless state. But the Bible student will surely say, this godless national gathering of Israel is not the fulfilment of all the glorious restoration, so glowingly described by the prophets. No, indeed.'⁴⁰¹

Nevertheless, he argued, this was precisely what the scriptures predicted:

'Let it be carefully noted that while God has repeatedly promised to gather Israel, with such a magnificent display of His miraculous power, that it shall no more be said, 'The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but the Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands whither he had driven them', Jer. 16:14; yet has He also said, 'Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation that hath no longing, before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you.' Zeph. 2:1,2. Could this prophecy be more literally fulfilled than in this present Zionist movement?'⁴⁰²

Blackstone, like Hal Lindsey a century later, seemed to interpret Scripture in the light of unfolding contemporary events, something which Spurgeon warned of as 'exegesis by current events'.⁴⁰³ No longer were Christian Zionists expecting Jewish national repentance to precede restoration; it could wait until after Jesus returned. Although popular with proto-fundamentalists, the book became more widely known in 1908, when a presentation edition was sent to several hundred thousand ministers and Christian workers, and again in 1917 when the Moody Bible Institute printed 'presentation copies' and sent them to ministers, missionaries and theological students.⁴⁰⁴ Jesus is Coming was the most widely read book on the return of Christ published in the 20th Century until the publication of Hal Lindsey's Late Great Planet Earth

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., p240.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ Charles H. Spurgeon, Lectures to My Students, (London, Passmore & Alabaster, 1893), p100.

⁴⁰⁴ Rennie, op.cit., p48; Rausch, op.cit., p264.

superseded only by Tim LaHaye's fictional Left Behind series.⁴⁰⁵ By his death in 1935 over a million copies had been printed.

Arising from his study of Bible prophecy, Blackstone gained a burden for the unevangelised Jews of Chicago and in 1887 founded the Chicago Hebrew Mission, which later became the American Messianic Fellowship. In 1888, Blackstone travelled to London for the General Missionary Conference and then through Europe to Palestine and Egypt. On his return in 1890, he organised and chaired the first conference between prominent Christian leaders and Reform rabbis in Chicago, entitled *The Past, Present and Future of Israel*.⁴⁰⁶ Blackstone discovered to his surprise that it was only the Christians who favoured Zionism. The Reform rabbis had no desire to return to Palestine and he faced strong opposition from them. Rabbi Emil Hirsh insisted, 'We modern Jews do not wish to be restored to Palestine ... the country wherein we live is our Palestine ... we will not go back ... to form a nationality of our own.'⁴⁰⁷ Without agreement, the conference issued somewhat diluted 'resolutions of sympathy' for the oppressed Jews of Russia which were sent to the Czar and other leaders. Blackstone felt these were inadequate and so in the following year, in March 1891, he lobbied the US President, Benjamin Harrison and his Secretary of State, James G. Blaine with a petition signed by no less than 413 prominent Jewish and Christian leaders including John and William Rockefeller. The petition called for an international conference on the restoration of the Jews to Palestine. The petition, which became known as the Blackstone Memorial, offered this solution:

⁴⁰⁵ W. M. Smith, 'Signs of the Times', Moody Monthly, August (1966), p5; Tim LaHaye & Jerry B. Jenkins, Left Behind, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1995); Tribulation Force, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1996); Nicolae, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1997); Soul Harvest, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1998); Apollyon, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1999); Assassins, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1999); The Indwelling, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2000); The Mark, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2001); Desecration, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2002); The Remnant, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2002). Sales of the Left Behind series now exceed 32 million copies. See Nancy Gibbs, 'Apocalypse Now' Time, 1 July 2002, p45. Hal Lindsey's Late Great Planet Earth (London, Lakeland, 1970) has reputedly sold over 18 million copies in English.

⁴⁰⁶ William E. Currie, God's Little Errand Boy. 100 Years of Blessing, (American Messianic Fellowship International, 1987).

⁴⁰⁷ Beth M. Lindberg, A God Filled Life: The Story of William E. Blackstone, (Chicago, The American Messianic Fellowship, n.d.), pp7-9.

‘Why not give Palestine back to them [the Jews] again? According to God’s distribution of nations it is their home, an inalienable possession from which they were expelled by force. Under their cultivation, it was a remarkably fruitful land, sustaining millions of Israelites, who industriously tilled its hillsides and valleys. They were agriculturalists and producers as well as a nation of great commercial importance - the centre of civilization and religion. Why shall not the powers which under the treaty of Berlin, in 1878, gave Bulgaria to the Bulgarians and Serbia to the Servians now give Palestine back to the Jews?’⁴⁰⁸

Although President Harrison did not act upon the petition, it was nevertheless pivotal in galvanising Christian and Jewish Zionist activists in the United States for the next sixty years. Justice Louis Brandeis, the first Jewish Justice of the US Supreme Court, who led the Jewish Zionist movement in the US from 1914, became a close friend of Blackstone and for twenty years they laboured to convince the American people and in particular, successive Presidents, to support the Zionist agenda. During that time, Blackstone sent Brandeis ‘very large sums of money for support of Zionist work.’⁴⁰⁹

Responsible for disbursing millions of dollars of dispensational funds entrusted to him for missionary work, Blackstone promised Brandeis that if he should not be Raptured with Blackstone, he was to use the funds for the relief of Jews who would come to believe in Christ and need supporting as missionaries throughout the world during the millennium.⁴¹⁰

In 1917, Blackstone was excited by the developments in Palestine following the defeat of the Turks and the triumphal entry of the Allies into Jerusalem who were ‘welcomed as deliverers by the people, and a Jewish Commission, authorized by the Allied governments already taking charge of the development of Jewish interests in Palestine – all of this does indeed thrill my heart.’⁴¹¹ In January 1918, Blackstone spoke at a large Jewish Zionist meeting in Los Angeles and declared that he had been committed to Zionism for 30 years. ‘This is because I believe that true Zionism is founded on the plan, purpose, and fiat of the everlasting and omnipotent God, as

⁴⁰⁸ Reuben Fink, America and Palestine, (New York, American Zionist Emergency Council, 1945), pp20-21, cited in Sharif, op.cit., p92.

⁴⁰⁹ Merkley, op.cit., p92.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹¹ Lindberg, op.cit., pp12-13.

prophetically recorded in His Holy Word, the Bible.’ He then went on to offer the Jews present three options. Rausch summarises Blackstone’s appeal:

‘He told the audience that there were only three options open to every Jew. The first was to become a “true” Christian, accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. He added that few Jews would accept this option. The second option was to become a “true” Zionist and “thus hold fast to the ancient hopes of the fathers, and the assured deliverance of Israel, through the coming of their Messiah, and complete national restoration and permanent settlement in the land which God has given them.” The third option was to be an “assimilant”. He explained that assimilants were “Jews who will not be either Christians or Zionists. They wish to remain in various nations enjoying their social, political and commercial advantages.”’⁴¹²

Blackstone then challenged his audience:

‘Oh, my Jewish friends, which of these paths shall be yours? We are living in tragic times. The most momentous events of all human history are impending. God says you are dear unto Him and that “He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye” Zech. 2:8. He has put an overwhelming love in my heart for you all, and therefore I have spoken thus plainly ... study this wonderful Word of God... and see how plainly God Himself has revealed Israel’s pathway unto the perfect day.’⁴¹³

Blackstone’s appeal reveals, perhaps more clearly than any other statement made by a contemporary dispensationalist, the logical consequences of the distinction made between God’s separate purposes for Israel and the Church, and the way in which this affected their approach to Jewish ‘mission’. Evangelism and Restorationism were not mutually exclusive but equal means to fulfilling God’s purposes among the Jews. In Blackstone’s mind, to choose ‘Jesus’ might be the Christian answer and was acknowledged albeit half-heartedly, but to choose Zionism was to be a ‘true Jew’ and preferable, certainly preferable to assimilation into secular Western society.

During his lifetime, Jewish Zionists honoured Blackstone more times than any other Christian leader. On one occasion, Brandeis wrote, ‘you are the Father of Zionism as your work antedates Herzl.’⁴¹⁴ In 1918, Elisha Friedman, Secretary of the University Zionist Society of New York, similarly declared, ‘A well known Christian layman, William E. Blackstone, antedated

⁴¹² Rausch, op.cit., pp268-269.

⁴¹³ Rausch, op.cit., pp268-269.

Theodor Herzl by five years in his advocacy of the re-establishment of a Jewish State.⁴¹⁵ What Blackstone expressed in his speeches, books and petitions, Scofield was to systematise and canonise through his thoroughly dispensational Reference Bible.

8.4 Cyrus Ingerson Scofield: The Canonising of Zionism (1843-1921)

Scofield may be regarded as the most influential exponent of Dispensationalism, following the publication of his Scofield Reference Bible by the Oxford University Press.⁴¹⁶ Ernest Sandeen insists ‘in the calendar of Fundamentalists no name is better known or more revered.’⁴¹⁷ Yet while writings on the early Brethren, such as J. N. Darby and American dispensationalists like D. L. Moody abound, Scofield remains an elusive and enigmatic figure. Only two biographies have been published, one by a fellow dispensationalist eulogises Scofield,⁴¹⁸ the other, from a Reformed perspective, portrays him as a charlatan, accused of perjury, fraud and embezzlement. He also deserted his wife and children and married again only three months after his divorce became final.⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁴ Currie, op.cit.

⁴¹⁵ Cutler B. Whitwell, ‘The Life Story of W.E.B. – and of “Jesus is Coming”’, The Sunday School Times, January 11, (1936), p19, cited in Rausch, op.cit., p265.

⁴¹⁶ C. I. Scofield, The Scofield Reference Bible, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1917); The New Scofield Reference Bible, edited by E. Schuyler English (New York, Oxford University Press, 1967); The Ryrie Study Bible Expanded Edition, (Chicago, Moody Bible Institute, 1994); The New Scofield Study Bible, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1984); Scofield Study Notes, (QuickVerse, Parsons Technology, 1994).

⁴¹⁷ Sandeen, op.cit., p222.

⁴¹⁸ Charles G. Trumbull, The Life Story of C. I. Scofield, (Oxford University Press, New York, 1920).

⁴¹⁹ Joseph M. Canfield, The Incredible Scofield and his Book, (Vallecito, California, Ross House Books, 1988). Canfield refers to a third source by William A. BeVier, A Biographical Sketch of C.I. Scofield: A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Southern Methodist University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of the Master of Arts with a Major in History. May 1960; See also Albertus Pieters, A Candid Examination of the Scofield Bible, (Grand Rapids, Douma Publications, n.d.). Scofield’s wife Leontine divorced him in 1881 while he was pastor of Hyde Park Congregational Church, St. Louis. Her divorce papers charged Scofield with, ‘gross neglect of duty’ having, ‘failed to support this plaintiff or her said children, or to contribute thereto, and has made no provision for them for food, clothing or a home...’ The court decided in favour of Leontine after some delay in 1883 and issued a decree of divorce in December of that year, describing Scofield as, ‘...not a fit person to have custody of the children.’ From the papers in case No. 2161, supplied by the Atchison County Court, cited in Canfield, op.cit., p89. He married Hettie Van Wark on 11th March 1884. Ibid., p100.

As a young and largely illiterate Christian, Scofield was profoundly influenced and schooled by James H. Brookes who in turn introduced him to J. N. Darby. Serving as Brookes' assistant, Scofield popularised Darby's distinctive futurist Dispensationalism, basing his reference notes on Darby's own distinctive translation of the Bible. Bass notes, 'the parallel between Scofield's notes and Darby's works only too clearly reveals that Scofield was not only a student of Darby's works, but that he copiously borrowed ideas, words and phrases.'⁴²⁰ The resemblance between Scofield and Darby is according to Gerstner, 'deep and systematic'.⁴²¹ One of Darby's biographers acknowledges, 'His perceptions of Scriptural truths are the source from which Scofield Reference Bibles get their characteristic notes.'⁴²² It is significant, however, that neither in the Introduction to his Scofield Reference Bible nor in the accompanying notes does he acknowledge his indebtedness to Darby.⁴²³

In 1888, Scofield published his first work called Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth.⁴²⁴ In it Scofield presented the hermeneutic principles of Dispensationalism he had allegedly been teaching his Bible classes for many years and which would become the theological presuppositions behind the notes of his Scofield Reference Bible. Not surprisingly, it was the Plymouth Brethren 'house' publishers, Loizeaux Brothers of New York, who printed the first edition and continue to do so, a Century later.⁴²⁵ Scofield was also representative of, but at the same time became a focus for, the growing prophetic and millennial movement in North America influenced by the Plymouth Brethren. The dispensational views later popularised by Scofield, were 'hammered into presentable form'⁴²⁶ by a series of Bible and Prophetic Conferences held across North America beginning in 1868. These followed

⁴²⁰ Bass, op.cit., p18. See also Loraine Boettner, The Millennium, (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1958), p369.

⁴²¹ Gerstner, op.cit., p43.

⁴²² Turner, op.cit., back cover.

⁴²³ C. I. Scofield, 'Introduction', The Scofield Reference Bible, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1909).

⁴²⁴ C. I. Scofield, Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth, (New York, Loizeaux Brothers, 1888).

⁴²⁵ Canfield, op.cit., p122.

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

the pattern of Bible readings and prophetic subjects established in the 1830s by Darby and Irving at Albury and Powerscourt.⁴²⁷ For example, one of the resolutions adopted by the 1878 Niagara Conference gives clear evidence of the Darbyite Dispensationalism and Christian Zionism of which Scofield was becoming an eager proselyte:

‘We believe that the world will not be converted during the present dispensation, but is fast ripening for judgement, while there will be fearful apostasy in the professing Christian body; and hence that the Lord Jesus will come in person to introduce the millennial age, when Israel shall be restored to their own land, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord.’⁴²⁸

Scofield first attended the Niagara Conference in 1887, completing his book Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth, during the 1888 conference. It was at these conferences that, in discussion with other Brethren leaders, the idea for his reference Bible took shape and found sponsors.⁴²⁹ The combination of an attractive format, illustrative notes, and cross references has led both critics and advocates to acknowledge Scofield’s Bible to have been the most influential book among evangelicals during the first half of the twentieth Century.⁴³⁰ James Barr claims that in the 1950s half of all conservative evangelical student groups were using the Scofield Reference Bible, and that it was, ‘... the most important single document of all Fundamentalism.’⁴³¹ Craig Blaising, professor of Systematic Theology at Dallas Theological Seminary and a dispensationalist, similarly acknowledges, ‘The Scofield Reference Bible became the Bible of Fundamentalism, and the theology of the notes approached confessional status in many Bible schools, institutes and seminaries established in the early decades of this Century.’⁴³² Sandeen

⁴²⁷ Bruce L. Shelly, ‘Niagara Conferences’, The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, edited by J. D. Douglas, revised edition (Exeter, Paternoster Press, 1978), p706.

⁴²⁸ Resolution included as Appendix A, in Sandeen, op.cit.

⁴²⁹ Arno C. Gaebelin, Moody Monthly, 43 (1943) p278.

⁴³⁰ Dwight Wilson, Armageddon Now!, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, 1977), p15; Sandeen, op.cit., p222.

⁴³¹ James Barr, Escaping from Fundamentalism, (London, SCM, 1984), p6.

⁴³² Craig A. Blaising ‘Dispensationalism, The Search for Definition’ in Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church, The Search for Definition, edited by Craig A. Blaising & Darrell L. Bock (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1992), p21.

observes, 'The book has thus been subtly but powerfully influential in spreading those views among hundreds of thousands who have regularly read that Bible and who often have been unaware of the distinction between the ancient text and the Scofield interpretation.'⁴³³

Scofield's Reference Bible has nevertheless undergone significant revision since it was first published in 1909. Scofield completed the first revision in 1917, apparently with the help of seven consulting editors - Henry G. Weston (President, Crozier Theological Seminary); James M. Gray (Dean, Moody Bible Institute); W. G. Moorehead (Professor, Xenia Theological Seminary); Elmore Harris (President, Toronto Bible Institute); William J. Erdman; Arno C. Gaebelin and Arthur T. Pierson, several of whom were D.L. Moody's colleagues.⁴³⁴ Canfield argues that the addition of these names, together with their academic qualifications was merely cosmetic, to give an air of respectability.⁴³⁵ Sandeen goes further, arguing 'Scofield only meant to gain support for his publication from both sides of the millenarian movement with this device.'⁴³⁶ In 1945, when a minor revision was published, some ultra-dispensationalists were so wedded to the 1917 edition that strong representations were made to the revision committee to 'hold the line.' Cornelius Stam questioned: 'Would revision neutralize the dispensational distinctions which Dr. Scofield had brought to light? Would it represent a retreat rather than an advance for dispensational truth? Would it impair the Reference Bible which had brought so much blessing to so many thousands of people?'⁴³⁷ Despite such reservations, revisions continued to adapt, modify, and elaborate Scofield's dispensational package. The New Scofield Reference Bible was published in 1967 edited by Dr E. Schuyler English. In 1984, a further revision based on the New International Version of the Bible was undertaken by three of the faculty from Philadelphia College of the Bible, Clarence Mason, Sherrill Babb and Paul Karleen, and published by the

⁴³³ Sandeen, op.cit., p222.

⁴³⁴ James M. Gray, President of Moody Bible Institute, and William J. Erdman.

⁴³⁵ Canfield, op.cit., p204.

⁴³⁶ Sandeen, op.cit., p224.

⁴³⁷ Cornelius R. Stam, The New Scofield Reference Bible, An Appraisal, (Chicago, Berean Bible Society), p12. cited in Canfield, op.cit., p218.

Oxford University Press as The New Scofield Study Bible.⁴³⁸ Charles Ryrie also published in his own name a more refined dispensational guide, the Ryrie Study Bible.⁴³⁹ William E. Cox offers this appraisal of his abiding influence:

‘Scofield’s footnotes and his systematized schemes of hermeneutics have been memorized by many as religiously as have verses of the Bible. It is not at all uncommon to hear devout men recite these footnotes prefaced by the words; “The Bible says ...” Many a pastor has lost all influence with members of his congregation and has been branded a liberal for no other reason than failure to concur with all the footnotes of Dr. Scofield. Even many ministers use the teachings of Scofield as tests of orthodoxy!’⁴⁴⁰

Scofield’s influence extended well beyond his published writings. In the 1890s during Scofield’s pastorate in Dallas he was also head of the Southwestern School of the Bible, the forerunner to Dallas Theological Seminary, which became Dispensationalism’s ‘most scholarly institution’.⁴⁴¹ The Seminary was founded in 1924 by one of Scofield’s disciples, Lewis Sperry Chafer, who in turn became Scofield’s most influential exponent. Chafer wrote the first systematic pro-Zionist dispensational theology running to eight large volumes. Shortly before his death, Chafer described his greatest academic achievement. ‘It goes on record that the Dallas Theological Seminary uses, recommends, and defends the Scofield Bible.’⁴⁴² It is perhaps therefore not surprising that Dallas Theological Seminary has since then, especially through the writings of Charles Ryrie⁴⁴³ and John Walvoord,⁴⁴⁴ continued to

⁴³⁸ C.I. Scofield, The New Scofield Study Bible, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1984).

⁴³⁹ Charles Ryrie, Ryrie Study Bible, (Chicago, Moody Bible Institute, 1994).

⁴⁴⁰ William E. Cox, An Examination of Dispensationalism, (Philadelphia, Presbyterian & Reformed, 1974), pp55-56.

⁴⁴¹ Gerstner, op.cit., p46.

⁴⁴² Ibid.

⁴⁴³ Charles C. Ryrie, The Basis of the Premillennial Faith, (Neptune, New Jersey, Loizeaux Brothers, 1953); Dispensationalism Today, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1965); Dispensationalism, (Moody Press, Chicago, 1995).

⁴⁴⁴ John Walvoord, Israel in Prophecy, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1962); The Nations in Prophecy, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1967); The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1975); The Rapture Question, rev. edn. (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1979); The Nations, Israel and the Church in Prophecy, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1988); Armageddon, Oil and the Middle East Crisis (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1990); Major Bible Prophecies, (New York, Harper Collins, 1991).

be the foremost apologist for and proponent of, Scofield's classical dispensational views and of Christian Zionism in particular.

8.5 Arno C. Gaebelein: Anti-Semitic Christian Zionism (1861-1945)

Arno Gaebelein is probably the most complex and controversial of the early dispensational Christian Zionists, principally for his views on prophecy, the Jews and Zionism. Gaebelein is distinguished for being the source of the prophetic notes in Scofield's Reference Bible.⁴⁴⁵ He was also a regular speaker at the Niagara Prophecy Conferences, and at the invitation of Lewis Sperry Chafer, lectured for a month each year at the Evangelical Theological College in Dallas, which later became Dallas Theological Seminary.⁴⁴⁶ In 1893, Gaebelein began publishing a periodical in Yiddish, Tigweth Israel – The Hope of Israel Monthly. A year later Stroeter came to work with him and edited an English version called Our Hope which was for Christians. The specific purpose of this periodical was to acquaint them with the Zionist movement and proclaim the imminent return of Christ.⁴⁴⁷ Like Scofield, Gaebelein was disciples by James Brookes who, he admitted, 'took me literally under his wings.'⁴⁴⁸ Scofield wrote the foreword to Gaebelein's, The Harmony of the Prophetic Word which Scofield admitted to devouring. In a letter to Gaebelein, written in September 1905, Scofield acknowledged:

'My beloved brother: By all means follow your own views of prophetic analysis. I sit at your feet when it comes to prophecy, and congratulate in advance the future readers of my Bible on having in their hands a safe, clear, sane guide through what to most is a labyrinth. Yours lovingly in Christ, Scofield.'⁴⁴⁹

Gaebelein's prophetic interpretations, for example, led him to deduce that NATO was to become the ten kings of the revived Roman Empire.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴⁵ Arno C. Gaebelein, The Conflict of the Ages, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1966).

⁴⁴⁶ Rausch, op.cit., p261.

⁴⁴⁷ Rausch, op.cit., p292.

⁴⁴⁸ Arno C. Gaebelein, Half A Century, (New York, Publication Office of Our Hope, 1930), p20. Cited in Gerstner, Wrongly, op.cit., p44.

⁴⁴⁹ Arno C. Gaebelein, The History of the Scofield Reference Bible, (Spokane, WA, Living Words Foundation, 1991), p33.

⁴⁵⁰ Our Hope, 55 (1948-49) p673, cited in Kyle, op.cit., p128.

Gaebelein has also at times been accused of anti-Semitism.⁴⁵¹ In his book, The Conflict of the Ages, he is alleged to have provided legitimacy for the 'Nazi attitude.'⁴⁵² For example, in response to the publication of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, a spurious work alleging to be the secret plans of a worldwide Jewish conspiracy to undermine civil authority, destroy Christianity and take over the international economy, Gaebelein accepted that it was the work of a Jew and agreed that:

'... they certainly laid out a path for the revolutionary Jews that has been strictly and literally followed. That the Jew has been a prominent factor in the revolutionary movements of the day, wherever they may have occurred, cannot truthfully be denied, any more than that it was a Jew who assassinated, with all his family, the former Autocrat of all the Russians; or than that a very large majority (said to be over 80%) of the present Bolshevist government in Moscow, are Jews: while along other lines, in the assembly of the League of Nations, the Jew's voice is heard, and it is by no means a plaintive, timid, or uninfluential one—the Jew is the coming man!'⁴⁵³

Two months later Gaebelein wrote about the 'Jewish Leadership in Russia.' claiming that forty-four out of fifty of the Bolshevik leaders were of Jewish origin. Rausch notes that Gaebelein was careful to clarify that 'they are not the God-fearing, law-abiding, peace-loving kind, but are those who have cast off faith in the God of their fathers and are the very opposite of the law and order-loving portion of the Jewish people.' According to Rausch, 'that they were hindering the Zionist movement was a crucial prophetic sign to Gaebelein.' In a third article entitled, 'Aspects of Jewish Power in the United States' Gaebelein stated:

'The new volume issued by the "'Dearborn Independent'" contains a great deal of truth concerning the Jews, especially that part of Jewry which rejects the law and testimony of their fathers ... there is nothing so vile on earth as an apostate Jew, who denies God and His Word. It is predicted in the Word of God that a large part of the Jews will become apostate, along with the Gentile masses. But not all Jews are liquor fiends, apostates and immoral. There is another side to this question!'⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵¹ Timothy P. Weber, Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming, (New York, Oxford, 1979), p154.

⁴⁵² Dwight Wilson, Armageddon Now: The Premillenarian Response to Russia and Israel since 1917, (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1977), p97.

⁴⁵³ Arno C. Gaebelein in Our Hope, 27 (April 1921) p601, quoted by Rausch in the Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, 23/2 (1980) p108.

⁴⁵⁴ Cited in David Rausch, 'Fundamentalism And The Jew: An Interpretive Essay' Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, 23/2 June (1980) pp107-112.

In his defence, Rausch concedes, 'Gaebelein's easy acceptance of Jewish control of the American liquor trust and bootlegging is certainly suspect' but insists he was only referring to 'apostate Jews'. Rausch also points out that in the second edition of Our Hope, Gaebelein wrote: 'the apathy, and even antipathy, toward the Jew, into which the Church has fallen, must be removed, and a better feeling awakened in her toward God's age-lasting people ... In Our Hope we preach to the Gentile church on behalf of the Jew.'⁴⁵⁵ Rausch also observes that Gaebelein was 'so fluent in Yiddish and had such a deep love for the Jewish people that he was more than once accused of being a Jew.' On a visit in 1895 to his hometown in Germany for example, he spoke to the local anti-Semite society and noted that it 'seemed to have a good effect'. Writing up his visit in Our Hope he lamented 'It is only too true that Protestant Germany is Jew-hating, and we fear, from what we have seen and heard, that sooner or later there will come another disgraceful outbreak.'⁴⁵⁶ Weber describes this apparent contradiction as 'ironic ambivalence', suggesting that premillennial prophetic views like those of Gaebelein, 'enabled them to give credence to the Protocols (and thereby sound anti-Semitic) even though they had been and remained staunch opponents of anti-Semitism.'⁴⁵⁷

Not only has Gaebelein been accused of anti-Semitic sentiments, Paul Merkley also claims that, although a dispensationalist he was not a 'Christian Zionist' either.⁴⁵⁸ He deduces this from the following quote:

'Zionism is not the divinely promised restoration of Israel ... [and] is not the fulfilment of the large number of predictions found in the Old Testament Scriptures, which relate to Israel's return to the land. Indeed, Zionism has very little use for arguments from the Word of God. It is rather a political and philanthropic undertaking. Instead of coming together before God, calling upon His name, trusting Him, that He is able to perform what He has often promised, they speak of their riches, their influence, their Colonial Bank, and court the favour of the

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., pp107-112.

⁴⁵⁶ Our Hope, 2 October (1895), p78.

⁴⁵⁷ Timothy P. Weber, 'A Reply To David Rausch's "Fundamentalism and the Jew"' Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, 24/1 March (1981) pp68-77.

⁴⁵⁸ Paul Charles Merkley, The Politics of Christian Zionism, 1891-1948, (London, Frank Cass, 1998), p66. Merkley also incorrectly spells Gaebelein as Gabelein.

Sultan. The great movement is one of unbelief and confidence in themselves instead of God's eternal purposes.'⁴⁵⁹

Gaebelein clearly had no illusions as to the origin or motives of the Zionist movement, which he regarded as 'apostate', yet he could also write about the slow return of Jews to Palestine in these terms, 'The wonderful development year after year, the ever increasing enthusiasm, the wise and far-seeing schemes ... are surely amazing ... the return of the Jews to Palestine in unbelief is before us in modern Zionism, therefore it is the most startling sign of all the signs of our times.'⁴⁶⁰ In the pages of Our Hope⁴⁶¹ Gaebelein frequently reported with enthusiasm the development of the various Zionist colonization societies in Palestine, supported the efforts of Herzl and informed a still largely ignorant and complacent American Christian community how prophecy was indeed being fulfilled in Palestine. Dispensationalists like Gaebelein may not necessarily have offered unconditional support for Zionism in the same way that Falwell and Robertson do today, but this did not make him any less a Christian Zionist.

Like other classical dispensationalists, Gaebelein distinguished between God's purposes for the Jews in this Church dispensation from the millennium to follow, keeping them in separate watertight compartments chronologically as well as eternally. He could therefore promote evangelism, which theoretically would lead to the disappearance of the Jews as a separate race, while at the same time supporting Jewish nationalism; he could describe 'apostate' Jews as in league with the devil yet defend them from anti-Semitism; he could malign Zionism while support Jewish restoration to Israel; he could show compassion for the Jews yet believe most would be destroyed in the Battle of Armageddon - simply because all these 'signs' were foretold in scripture. Gaebelein therefore in many ways sums up the contradictions inherent within the proto-fundamentalist movement.

Dispensational Christian Zionism, with its commitment to biblical

⁴⁵⁹ Timothy P. Weber, Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism 1875-1982, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1983), p137, citing Gaebelein, Has God Cast Away His People? (1905).

⁴⁶⁰ 'The Fourth Zionist Congress: The Most Striking Sign of Our Times', Our Hope, 6, September (1900). p72, cited in Rausch, op.cit., p247.

⁴⁶¹ Rausch claims this periodical had a unique and formative ministry within the Proto-

literalism, increasingly came to recognise that restoration was indeed being achieved, but in 'unbelief' and therefore biblical predictions were found to confirm it. While dispensationalists remained committed to Jewish evangelism, there was no imperative or necessity to share the gospel with Jews since their national repentance would only occur after their restoration and Jesus' return. Offering practical and financial support to bring about their restoration became the principal means of its fulfilment.⁴⁶² Although dispensationalists in the early 20th Century continued to see in such events as the rise of communism, the Balfour Declaration and anti-Semitism evidence of the imminent return of Christ, there was a gradual decline in the 'intellectual prestige of Fundamentalism.'⁴⁶³ In the period from 1918 right up to 1948, Merkley observes how increasingly secular arguments were made for the Zionist cause, with a 'decreasing use of explicitly theological vocabulary.'⁴⁶⁴ American foreign policy was increasingly determined by the need to maintain good relations with the strategic oil-rich Arab nations at the very same time America was engaged in a race to prevent Soviet hegemony.

As the American political establishment began to show less enthusiasm for Blackstone's memorial, the Jewish Zionist movement discovered more influential friends among liberal church leaders who had greater leverage with the Presidency and were more interested in Jewish rights than converting them and fulfilling prophecy.

9. Anti-Semitism and American Liberal Christian Zionism (1918-1967)

In the early 20th Century, following the devastating toll of the First World War and then the Great Depression, Fundamentalism in America became more and more preoccupied with refuting liberal theology, the social gospel and Darwinian evolution rather than with prophetic speculation. Between 1910 and 1915 a series of 12 booklets, called The Fundamentals⁴⁶⁵ were produced in which 64 different authors wrote some 90 articles in defence of a

Fundamentalist movement. See Rausch, op.cit., p225.

⁴⁶² Rausch, op.cit., pp213-216; Merkley, op.cit., 92.

⁴⁶³ Merkley, op.cit., p72-74.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid., p114.

⁴⁶⁵ The Fundamentals, 12 Volumes, (Chicago, Testimony Publishing Company. 1910-1915).

conservative evangelical position on various doctrinal and moral issues.⁴⁶⁶ Although Gaebelien contributed an article addressing the place of the Jews in prophecy, it was essentially a defence of the Bible's inerrancy.⁴⁶⁷ Conservative evangelicals, while initially suspicious of the 'new' premillennialists and resistant of their 'secret Rapture' doctrine, gradually welcomed the support of dispensationalists against a common liberal opponent and there was a 'closing of ranks' between them.⁴⁶⁸ This rapprochement did much to legitimise and spread the acceptance of dispensational eschatology. By 1901, Norman Kraus argues, 'the dispensationalists had won the day so completely that for the next fifty years friend and foe alike largely identified Dispensationalism with Premillennialism.'⁴⁶⁹

In a detailed history of the rise of 20th Century American Fundamentalism prior to 1970, Erling Jorstad traces the rise of the Christian right with its anti-Communist and xenophobic agenda yet there is not a single reference to Israel.⁴⁷⁰ Similarly, in George Marsden's historical overview of the rise of Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism in America, he observes that despite some evidence of anti-Semitism, in the early 20th Century there seemed little interest in contemporary Israel among conservative evangelicals.⁴⁷¹ Others such as David Rausch have traced in more detail evidence of anti-Semitism within Christian Fundamentalism.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁶ Of the 90 articles, 29 defended the Bible, 31 dealt with doctrinal issues such as the virgin birth, deity of Christ, etc. The remaining 30 focussed on mission, evangelism and personal testimonies. See Ernest Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800-1930, (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1970).

⁴⁶⁷ Arno C. Gaebelien, 'Fulfilled Prophecy, A Potent Argument for the Bible.' The Fundamentals, 11, (Chicago, Testimony Publishing Company. 1910-1915), pp55-86.

⁴⁶⁸ Kyle, op.cit., p105.

⁴⁶⁹ C. Norman Kraus, Dispensationalism in America, (Richmond, John Knox Press, 1958), p104.

⁴⁷⁰ Erling Jorstad, The Politics of Doomsday, Fundamentalists of the Far Right, (Nashville, Abingdom, 1970).

⁴⁷¹ George Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism 1870-1925, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1980).

⁴⁷² For a detailed analysis of how Christian teaching has shaped American attitudes toward the Jews see, Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark, Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism, (New York, Harper & Row, 1966); David A. Rausch, Fundamentalists, Evangelicals and Anti-Semitism, (Valley Forge, Trinity Press International, 1993).

For example, in 1919, aware that the British and French were undermining his goal of self-determination in Syria, Woodrow Wilson sent Charles Crane, a wealthy American Arabist as head of the King-Crane Commission to investigate the wishes of the indigenous people. Reservations expressed by Arab leaders and expatriate Americans led Crane's Commission to recommend the abandonment of American support for a Jewish homeland, that further Jewish immigration be severely restricted and America or Britain govern Palestine. While Crane went on to help finance the first explorations for oil in Saudi Arabia and the Yemen, his admiration for Hitler's Germany 'the real political bulwark of Christian culture', and of Stalin's anti-Jewish purges in Soviet Russia, led his biographer to describe his later life as dominated by, 'a most pronounced prejudice ... [and] ... unbridled dislike of Jews.' Crane tried to persuade President Franklin D. Roosevelt to shun the counsels of Felix Frankfurter and to avoid appointing other Jews to government posts. Crane 'envisioned a world-wide attempt on the part of the Jews to stamp out all religious life and felt that only a coalition of Muslims and Roman Catholics would be strong enough to defeat such designs.' In 1933, he even proposed to Haj Amin Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, that the Mufti open talks with the Vatican to plan an anti-Jewish campaign.⁴⁷³ The reasoning behind opposition by American missionaries to the founding of the State of Israel is a complex one. In 1948, weeks before the State of Israel was declared, Bayard Dodge who had founded the American University in Beirut, retired to Princeton in New Jersey. In April 1948, he wrote a watershed article in The Readers Digest entitled, 'Must There Be War in the Middle East?' Kaplan describes it as the 'definitive statement' of American Arabists on the birth of the State of Israel.

'Though he cautioned, "Not all Jews are Zionist and not all Zionists are extremists", for Dodge the Zionist movement was a tragedy of which little good could come. Dodge was not anti-Semitic ... Dodge's argument against Zionism rests, not on the politics of the movement, but on the Arabs' opposition to it, which in Dodge's view made the Zionist program unrealistic and therefore dangerous. Years and decades of strife would, Dodge knew, follow the birth of the Jewish State. As a result, wrote Dodge, "All the work done by our philanthropic

⁴⁷³ Robert Kaplan, The Arabists, The Romance of an American Elite, (New York, The Free Press, 1993), p71.

non-profit American agencies in the Arab world - our Near East Foundation, our missions, our YMCA and YWCA, our Boston Jesuit college in Baghdad, our colleges in Cairo, Beirut, Damascus - would be threatened with complete frustration and collapse ... so would our oil concessions", a scenario that Dodge said would help Communist Russia. Dodge then quoted a fellow "American Middle East expert" as saying that "they [the Russians] intend to get many thousands of Russian Communist Jews into the Palestinian Jewish State." Though Dodge made passing reference to the Holocaust (barely three years old at the time he wrote the article), he appeared oblivious to its psychological and historical ramifications upon the European Jewish refugees in Palestine. While admitting that the Arabs would never countenance a Jewish State, Dodge nevertheless exhorted Jews to lay down their arms and talk to the Arabs. The article ends with a quote from the Bible, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts". Dodge did not seem aware that the death-camp-haunted Jews of Palestine read the Old Testament with different eyes from those of a Protestant missionary.⁴⁷⁴

Kaplan argues that Dodge's views were representative of the wider expatriate and missionary community of Beirut who believed the US, British and Russians morally and politically wrong to railroad the partition of Palestine through the United Nations. Richard Crossman who was a member of the Anglo-American team investigating the Palestine crisis in 1947, observed that the American Protestant missionaries, 'challenged the Zionist case with all the arguments of the most violently pro-Arab British Middle Eastern officials.'⁴⁷⁵ Kaplan concludes, 'the American community in Lebanon was almost, to a man, psychologically opposed to the State of Israel. But very few went over the line into anti-Semitism.'⁴⁷⁶ In his memoirs, Harry Truman also claims his post-war State Department specialists were opposed to the idea of a Jewish State because they either wanted to appease the Arabs or because they were anti-Semitic.⁴⁷⁷

During the 1930s and 1940s, both prior to and after the founding of the State of Israel, the principal allies of Zionism were liberal Protestant Christians such as Paul Tillich, William F. Albright and Reinhold Niebuhr who

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., p80.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., p81.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid., p185.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid., p185.

founded the Christian Council on Palestine in 1942.⁴⁷⁸ Niebuhr, as Professor of Social Ethics at Union Theological Seminary, defended his Zionism on pragmatic rather than religious grounds. Jewish persecution in Europe combined with restrictive immigration laws in America led Niebuhr to recognise the 'moral right' of the Jews to Palestine in order for them to survive as a nation.⁴⁷⁹ In 1946, he testified before the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry in Washington on behalf of the Christian Council on Palestine. While acknowledging the conflicting rights of Arabs and Jews in Palestine, he argued:

'The fact however that the Arabs have a vast hinterland in the Middle East, and the fact that the Jews have nowhere to go, establishes the relative justice of their claims and of their cause ... Arab sovereignty over a portion of the debated territory must undoubtedly be sacrificed for the sake of establishing a world Jewish homeland.'⁴⁸⁰

In 1958, by which time he was at odds with most other liberal Protestant leaders, Niebuhr continued to insist on a wider definition of Christian Zionism. In an article entitled, 'The Relation of Christians and Jews in Western Civilization' Niebuhr wrote, 'Many Christians are pro-Zionist in the sense that they believe that a homeless people require a homeland; but we feel as embarrassed as anti-Zionist religious Jews when messianic claims are used to substantiate the right of the Jews to the particular homeland in Palestine.'⁴⁸¹ Apart from wishing to see Arabs 'otherwise compensated', Niebuhr did not appear to support the view that homeless Palestinians also 'require a homeland'.

The 1967 'Six Day War' marked a significant watershed for evangelical Christian interest in Israel and Zionism. With the annexation of the West Bank, Liberal Protestants and organisations such as the World Council of Churches increasingly distanced themselves from Zionism, whereas the same events fuelled a resurgence of enthusiasm for Eretz Israel among

⁴⁷⁸ Merkley, op.cit., pp141-145.

⁴⁷⁹ Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nation, 21 February (1942), pp214-216 and 28 February (1942), pp253-255, cited in Sharif, op.cit., p113.

⁴⁸⁰ US Department of State, 'Hearings of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry', 14 January (1946), p147. Cited in Sharif, op.cit., p113.

⁴⁸¹ Reinhold Niebuhr, Pious and Secular America, (New York, Scribner's, 1958), pp86-112, cited in Merkley, op.cit., p141.

fundamentalists and evangelicals.⁴⁸²

10. Contemporary American Evangelical Christian Zionism (1948-2002)

During the first half of the 20th Century some notable dispensational leaders did maintain a faithful commitment to a 'biblical' basis for the imminent realisation of a Jewish restoration to Palestine. These included Harry Ironside, M.R. DeHaan⁴⁸³ and Reuben A Torrey.⁴⁸⁴ A.B. Simpson, for example, who founded the Christian and Missionary Alliance, apparently sobbed as he read to his church congregation the text of the Balfour Declaration.⁴⁸⁵ Others saw the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact of 1939,⁴⁸⁶ the rise of Japanese Imperialism, and Chinese Communism⁴⁸⁷ as 'electrifying' signs of the coming Battle of Armageddon.

The founding of the State of Israel in 1948 naturally came to be seen as the most significant fulfilment of biblical prophecy,⁴⁸⁸ and 'the greatest piece of prophetic news that we have had in the 20th Century.'⁴⁸⁹ Dr M. R. DeHaan, founder of the Radio Bible Class Worldwide Gospel Broadcast, was regularly heard via over 600 radio stations worldwide. In 1947, DeHaan published his studies on the Book of Daniel in which he interpreted the events before and after the Balfour Declaration in the light of Abrahamic covenant and Belshazzar's 'Handwriting on the Wall'. He also described the failure of Balfour to set aside the whole of Palestine for the Jewish people as probably,

⁴⁸² Rosemary Radford Ruether & Herman J. Ruether, The Wrath of Jonah, The Crisis of Nationalism in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, (San Francisco, Harper, 1989), p173.

⁴⁸³ M.R. DeHaan, The Jew and Palestine in Prophecy, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1950).

⁴⁸⁴ Reuben A Torrey, The Return of the Lord Jesus, (Los Angeles, Bible Institute of Los Angeles, 1913), p89.

⁴⁸⁵ Weekly Evangel, 19 May (1917), p17, cited in Kyle, op.cit., 109. The Balfour Declaration was not actually released until November 1917, so the dating of this response is suspect.

⁴⁸⁶ Louis S. Bauman, 'Russia and Armageddon' King's Business, 29 September, (1938), p286; Kyle, op.cit., p111.

⁴⁸⁷ H. A. Ironside, 'The Kings of the East' King's Business, 29 January (1938), p9; Louis T. Talbot, 'The Army of 200 Million' King's Business, 23 October, (1932), p424; Kyle, op.cit., p111.

⁴⁸⁸ Stanley J. Grenz, The Millennial Maze, (Downers Grove, Illinois, InterVarsity, 1992), p92; Hal Lindsey, The Late Great Planet Earth, (London, Lakeland, 1970), pp43, 53-58; Hannah Hurnard, Watchman on the Walls, (London, Olive Press, 1950), pp11-12.

⁴⁸⁹ Louis T. Talbot & William W. Orr, The Nation of Israel and the Word of God!, (Los Angeles, Bible Institute of Los Angeles, 1948), p8.

‘the greatest mistake in all history’.⁴⁹⁰ Like many Zionists, DeHaan lamented British intransigence over attempts to create a Jewish State and ‘clear the land of its unlawful possessors’:

‘Now the land of Palestine is the Holy Land because in His eternal purposes and program, God has set it aside for the one purpose of occupation by his peculiar people, the descendants of Jacob, and because it is God’s Holy Land, anyone who tampers with it and seeks to separate its people from their possession comes under the judgement of God ... If only the nations had been able to see their way clear to keep their promise to set aside the Holy Land as a national refuge and return it again to their rightful possessors to whom God had promised it, God might have raised many, many more of the seed of Jacob like Dr. Weizman (sic) to bring blessing and help to the nations of the world.’⁴⁹¹

It is not clear how DeHaan intended his readers to see Weizmann’s discovery of a synthetic method for acetone production, a solvent used in the manufacture of explosives, as a blessing to the world.

Following the war of 1967, Billy Graham’s father-in-law Nelson Bell, editor of the prestigious and authoritative mouthpiece of conservative Evangelicalism Christianity Today, expressed the sentiments of many American evangelicals when, in an editorial for the magazine he wrote, ‘for the first time in more than 2,000 years Jerusalem is now completely in the hands of the Jews gives a student of the Bible a thrill and a renewed faith in the accuracy and validity of the Bible.’⁴⁹² From 1967 onwards, a succession of American Christian and political leaders including several Presidents identified with this perspective. In 1968, for example, in very much the same way Lloyd George had described the influence of his own upbringing, Lyndon B. Johnson explained the origin of his sympathy for Zionism:

‘Most, if not all of you, have very deep ties with the land and with the people of Israel, as I do; for my Christian faith sprang from yours. The Bible stories are woven into my childhood memories as the gallant struggle of modern Jews to be free of persecution is also woven into our souls.’⁴⁹³

⁴⁹⁰ DeHaan, op.cit., p61.

⁴⁹¹ M. R. DeHaan, Daniel the Prophet, 35 Simple Studies in the Book of Daniel, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1947), pp169-172.

⁴⁹² Donald Wagner, ‘Evangelicals and Israel: Theological Roots of a Political Alliance’ The Christian Century, November 4, (1998), pp1020-1026.

⁴⁹³ Lyndon B. Johnson, Speech delivered on September 10, (1968), <http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/US-Israel/lbjpeace1.html>

In 1976, described as ‘the year of the ascendancy of Christian Zionism,’⁴⁹⁴ a series of events brought Christian Zionism to the forefront of US mainstream politics. Jimmy Carter was elected as the ‘born again’ President drawing the support of the evangelical right. In Israel, Menachem Begin and the Likud Party also came to power in 1977. A tripartite coalition emerged between the political Right, evangelicals and the US Israeli lobby to form a powerful coalition. In 1978, Jimmy Carter acknowledged how his own pro-Zionist beliefs had influenced his Middle East policy.⁴⁹⁵ In a speech, he described the State of Israel as, ‘a return at last, to the biblical land from which the Jews were driven so many hundreds of years ago ... The establishment of the nation of Israel is the fulfilment of biblical prophecy and the very essence of its fulfilment.’⁴⁹⁶ However, when Carter vacillated over the aggressive Likud settlement programme and proposed the creation of a Palestinian homeland, he alienated the pro-Israeli coalition of Jews and evangelicals who switched their support to Ronald Reagan in the 1980 elections.

10.1 Ronald Reagan: President of Christian Zionism

While the popular perception of Ronald Reagan is of someone driven by political expediency, he was nevertheless raised on premillennial dispensational theology, influenced not only by his mother Nelle,⁴⁹⁷ but also by leaders such as Billy Graham, Pat Boone and George Otis. Halsell traces their influence on Reagan’s study of biblical prophecy and views of the End Times.⁴⁹⁸ In 1971, for example, Reagan read Hal Lindsey’s *Late Great Planet Earth* and many other popular books about Armageddon. Reagan’s legal secretary, Herb Ellingwood, whom Halsell describes as ‘one of the most fervent believers in the cult of Israel’ and the imminent battle of Armageddon, described how they would often discuss the fulfilment of biblical prophecy.⁴⁹⁹

⁴⁹⁴ Pieterse, op.cit., p92.

⁴⁹⁵ Jimmy Carter, *The Blood of Abraham*, (London, Sidgwick & Jackson, 1985).

⁴⁹⁶ Speech by President Jimmy Carter on 1 May 1978, *Department of State Bulletin*, vol. 78, No. 2015, (1978), p4, cited in Sharif, op.cit., p136.

⁴⁹⁷ Grace Halsell, *Prophecy and Politics, Militant Evangelists on the Road to Nuclear War*, (Westport, Connecticut, Lawrence Hill, 1986), pp40-50. See also Bob Slosser, *Reagan Inside Out*, (Dallas, Word, 1984).

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid., p42.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., p43.

In 1971, while a governor in California, Reagan discussed at length with a close colleague, James Mills, his understanding of how contemporary geo-political events were the fulfilment of biblical prophecy. Mills made copious notes of their conversation, later published in the San Diego Magazine. Based on his reading of Ezekiel 38, Reagan insisted that the Israel would soon come under attack from ungodly nations like Libya and Ethiopia:

‘Do you understand the significance of that? Libya has now gone communist, and that’s a sign that the day of Armageddon isn’t far off ... It’s necessary to fulfill the prophecy that Ethiopia will be one of the ungodly nations that go against Israel ... For the first time ever, everything is in place for the battle of Armageddon and the Second Coming of Christ ... Ezekiel tells us that Gog, the nation that will lead all of the other powers of darkness against Israel, will come out of the north. Biblical scholars have been saying for generations that Gog must be Russia ... now that Russia has become communist and atheistic, now that Russia has set itself against God. Now it fits the description of Gog perfectly.’⁵⁰⁰

Mills described how Reagan spoke about the impending nuclear holocaust, ‘like a preacher to a sceptical college student.’⁵⁰¹ In another conversation recorded by the evangelist Harald Bredesen of California, Reagan described how he was convinced God was bringing the Jews back to Israel. Bredesen was impressed by Reagan’s grasp of a dispensational view of Israel.

‘A good example of his full awareness of what was going on, in terms of prophetic eschatology, was his ability to cite the very day in 1948 when Israel was reconstituted as a nation. I got the impression that Reagan was definitely aware of God’s purpose for the Mideast. And for that reason felt the period which we’re going through now is particularly significant, since the events projected in the Bible are coming to a head right at this time.’⁵⁰²

George Otis, a former electronics manufacturer who made components for nuclear weapons, and who later operated four Christian radio stations in southern Lebanon was influential in securing Reagan’s election as President. Otis who was also honorary chairman of ‘Christians for Reagan’. In a 1976 TV interview, Otis discussed with Reagan their views on how ‘dramatic Bible prophecy’ was being fulfilled in the ‘re-emergence of Israel as a nation.’ Otis then asked Reagan, ‘What do you feel America should do if

⁵⁰⁰ Cited in Halsell, Prophecy., op.cit., pp5, 45.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid.

⁵⁰² Ibid., pp46-47.

ever in the future, Israel were about to be destroyed by attacking enemy nations?' Reagan replied, 'We have a pledge to Israel to the preservation of that nation ... we have an obligation, a responsibility, and a destiny.'⁵⁰³

Halsell shows how, even during the 1980 presidential campaign, Reagan continued to make reference to 'Armageddon'. On numerous occasions Reagan was recorded as saying, 'We could be the generation that sees Armageddon.'⁵⁰⁴ In the same year, William Safire, columnist for the New York Times quoted Reagan as saying to a group of Jewish leaders, 'Israel is the only stable democracy we can rely on as a spot where Armageddon could come.'⁵⁰⁵

Donald Wagner outlines how Reagan's election as President therefore gave a considerable boost to the Christian Zionist cause:

'The election of Ronald Reagan ushered in not only the most pro-Israel administration in history but gave several Christian Zionists prominent political posts. In addition to the President, those who subscribed to a futurist premillennial theology and Christian Zionism included Attorney General Ed Meese, Secretary of Defence Casper Weinberger, and Secretary of the Interior James Watt.'⁵⁰⁶

'White House Seminars' became a regular feature of Reagan's administration bringing leading Christian Zionists like Jerry Falwell, Mike Evans and Hal Lindsey into direct personal contact with national and Congressional leaders. In 1982, for instance, Reagan invited Falwell to give a briefing to the National Security Council on the possibility of a nuclear war with Russia.⁵⁰⁷ Hal Lindsey also claimed Reagan invited him to speak on the subject of war with Russia to Pentagon officials.⁵⁰⁸

In Reagan's 'Address to the Nation on the West Bank and the Palestinians', also given in 1982, and marking the ejection of the PLO from

⁵⁰³ Larry Jones and Gerald T. Sheppard, 'Ronald Reagan's "Theology" of Armageddon' in All in the Name of the Bible, edited by Hassan Haddad and Donald Wagner (Battleboro, Vermont, Amana, 1986), pp32-33.

⁵⁰⁴ Halsell, Prophecy, op.cit., pp5. See also Kenneth Woodward, 'Arguing Armageddon' Newsweek, 5 November 1984;

⁵⁰⁵ Cited in Halsell, Prophecy, op.cit., p47.

⁵⁰⁶ Donald Wagner, 'Beyond Armageddon', The Link, New York: Americans for Middle East Understanding; October-November, (1992), p5.

⁵⁰⁷ Halsell, Prophecy, op.cit., p47

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

Beirut, he presented the official position of the United States government on the Arab-Israeli question:

‘Today has been a day that should make all of us proud ... Our involvement in the search for Mideast peace is not a matter of preference; it is a moral imperative ... We also have an irreversible commitment to the survival and territorial integrity of friendly states ... So the United States will not support the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza, and we will not support annexation or permanent control by Israel ... But it is the firm view of the United States that self-government by the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza in association with Jordan offers the best chance for a durable, just and lasting peace.’⁵⁰⁹

In a personal conversation reported in the Washington Post two years later in April 1984, Reagan elaborated on his own personal convictions to Tom Dine, one of Israel’s chief lobbyists working for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee:

‘You know, I turn back to the ancient prophets in the Old Testament and the signs foretelling Armageddon, and I find myself wondering if - if we’re the generation that is going to see that come about. I don’t know if you’ve noted any of these prophecies lately, but believe me they certainly describe the times we’re going through.’⁵¹⁰

In 1986, when tensions grew between the US and Libya, James Mills, by then president pro tem of the California State Senate, claimed Reagan expressed strong animosity toward Libya because he saw them as ‘one of the prophesied enemies of Israel and therefore an enemy of God’s’.⁵¹¹ Mills noted the logical consequences of Reagan’s pessimistic and deterministic dispensational presuppositions:

‘Certainly his attitudes relative to military spending, and his coolness to all proposals for nuclear disarmament, are consistent with such apocalyptic views ... Armageddon, as foreseen in the books of Ezekiel and Revelation, cannot take place in a world that has been disarmed. Anyone who believes it will come to pass cannot expect that disarmament will ever come about. It is contrary to God’s plan as set forth in his word ... The President’s domestic and monetary policies, too, are in harmony with a literal interpretation of biblical prophecies. There is no room to get wrought up about the national debt if God is soon going to foreclose on the whole world ... Why be concerned

⁵⁰⁹ Cited in Carter, op.cit., pp228-234.

⁵¹⁰ Ronnie Dugger, ‘Does Reagan Expect a Nuclear Armageddon?’ Washington Post, 18 April (1984).

⁵¹¹ Halsell, Prophecy, op.cit., p5.

about conservation? Why waste time and money preserving things for future generations when everything is going to come to a fiery end with this one? ... The implementation of the return of Christ to the earth hardly admits of competition for funds by outfits like Amtrak. It follows that all domestic programs, especially those that entail capital outlay, can and should be curtailed to free up money to finance the development of nuclear weapons in order to rain fiery destruction upon the evil enemies of God and His people.⁵¹²

Halsell observes how Reagan was consistent throughout his political career in making similar statements about America fighting against satanic forces in an imminent and inevitable nuclear Armageddon. She concludes that these help explain why Reagan felt he had 'a mandate to spend trillions of dollars preparing for a nuclear Gog and Magog war.'⁵¹³

While George Bush Snr., Bill Clinton and George Bush Jnr. have not appeared to share the same dispensational presuppositions of either Jimmy Carter or Ronald Reagan, they nevertheless have maintained, however reluctantly, the strong pro-Zionist position of their predecessors.⁵¹⁴ Politicians tend to reflect the views of their electorate, or at least of lobby groups and the Zionist lobby are considered by many to be the most powerful in the United States.⁵¹⁵ Three Christian leaders, in particular, each given a White House platform by Reagan, have probably achieved more than any others have in the last forty years to ensure American foreign policy remains resolutely pro-Zionist. They are, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and Hal Lindsey. Each has made a unique contribution to the development of Christian Zionism.

10.2 Jerry Falwell: Ambassador of Christian Zionism

Jerry Falwell is the pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church and the Founder and Chancellor of the 10,000 student independent Baptist Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia.⁵¹⁶ Jerry Falwell Ministries sponsor the Liberty Broadcasting Network TV channel and syndicated Old Time Gospel Hour programme which is broadcast on 350 stations in the USA and has a budget

⁵¹² Ibid., pp49-50.

⁵¹³ Ibid.

⁵¹⁴ George Bush, Speech to the American Jewish Committee, May 3, (2001), <http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/US-Israel/presquote.html>

⁵¹⁵ Michael Lind, 'The Israel Lobby and American Power' *Prospect*, April (2002), pp22-29; Halsell, *Prophecy*, op.cit.

of \$60 million.⁵¹⁷ In his early ministry, Falwell shunned politics. In 1964, he wrote:

‘Believing the Bible as I do, I would find it impossible to stop preaching the pure saving gospel of Jesus Christ and begin doing anything else, including fighting communism, or participating in civil rights reform. Preachers are not called to be politicians but to be soul winners. Nowhere are we commissioned to reform the externals.’⁵¹⁸

Falwell’s change of mind came in 1967 after Israel’s Six Day War. He entered politics and became an avid supporter of the Zionist State. Grace Halsell describes Falwell’s conversion:

‘The stunning Israeli victory made a big impact not only on Falwell, but on a lot of Americans ... Remember that in 1967, the United States was mired in the Vietnam War. Many felt a sense of defeat, helplessness and discouragement. As Americans, we were made acutely aware of our own diminished authority, of no longer being able to police the world or perhaps even our own neighborhoods ... Many Americans, including Falwell, turned worshipful glances toward Israel, which they viewed as militarily strong and invincible. They gave their unstinting approval to the Israeli take-over of Arab lands because they perceived this conquest as power and righteousness ... Macho or muscular Christians such as Falwell credited Israeli General Moshe Dayan with this victory over Arab forces and termed him the Miracle Man of the Age, and the Pentagon invited him to visit Vietnam and tell us how to win that war.’⁵¹⁹

In 1979, the same year Falwell founded Moral Majority, the Israeli government gave Falwell a Lear jet to assist him in his advocacy of Israel. A year later in 1980, Falwell also became the first Gentile to be awarded the Vladimir Ze’ev Jabotinsky medal for Zionist excellence by Israel’s Prime Minister, Menachem Begin. Jabotinsky was the founder of Revisionist Zionism and held that Jews had a divine mandate to occupy and settle ‘on both sides of the Jordan River’ and were not accountable to international law.⁵²⁰ When Israel bombed Iraq’s nuclear plant in 1981, Begin phoned Falwell before he called Reagan. He also asked Falwell to ‘explain to the

⁵¹⁶ <http://falwell.com>

⁵¹⁷ Iwan Russell-Jones, ‘Give me that prime time religion’ New Internationalist, 133, March (1984).

⁵¹⁸ James Price and William Goodman, Jerry Falwell, An Unauthorized Profile, cited in Grace Halsell, Prophecy and Politics, Militant Evangelists on the Road to Nuclear War, (Westport, Connecticut, Lawrence Hill, 1986), p72-73.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

⁵²⁰ Allan C. Brownfeld, ‘Fundamentalists and the Millennium: A Potential Threat to Middle Eastern Peace’ The Washington Report, June (1999), pp82-84.

Christian public the reasons for the bombing.⁵²¹ During the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, Falwell similarly defended Israel's actions:

'When the massacres occurred at the two Palestinian camps, Falwell just mimicked the Israeli line: "The Israelis were not involved." And even when The New York Times was giving eyewitness accounts of Israeli flares sent up to help the Phalangists go into the camp, Falwell was saying, "That's just propaganda".⁵²²

In March 1985, Falwell spoke to the conservative Rabbinical Assembly in Miami and pledged to 'mobilize 70 million conservative Christians for Israel and against anti-Semitism.'⁵²³ In January 1998, when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited Washington, his first meeting was with Jerry Falwell and with The National Unity Coalition for Israel, a large gathering of more than 500 fundamentalist Christian leaders, rather than with President Clinton. According to Donald Wagner, the crowd hailed Netanyahu as 'the Ronald Reagan of Israel.' This time Falwell promised to contact 200,000 pastors and church leaders who receive his National Liberty Journal⁵²⁴ and ask them to 'tell President Clinton to refrain from putting pressure on Israel' to comply with the Oslo accords.⁵²⁵ In an interview with The Washington Post in 1999, Falwell described the West Bank as 'an integral part of Israel.' Pressing Israel to withdraw, he added, 'would be like asking America to give Texas to Mexico, to bring about a good relationship. It's ridiculous.'⁵²⁶ In 2000, Falwell revived Moral Majority under the name People of Faith 2000, 'a movement to reclaim America as one nation under God' and which also takes a strong pro-Israeli stance.⁵²⁷ Falwell has succeeded, probably better than any other American Christian leader, to ensure his followers recognise that their Christian duty to God involves providing unconditional support for the State of Israel.

⁵²¹ Donald Wagner, 'Evangelicals and Israel: Theological Roots of a Political Alliance.' The Christian Century, November 4, (1998), pp1020-1026.

⁵²² Brownfeld, op.cit., pp82-84.

⁵²³ Wagner, 'Evangelicals', op.cit., pp1020-1026.

⁵²⁴ <http://www.nljonline.com/feb02>

⁵²⁵ Wagner, 'Evangelicals', op.cit., pp1020-1026.

⁵²⁶ Brownfeld, op.cit., pp82-84.

⁵²⁷ Jerry Falwell, <http://falwell.com/action%20alerts/actnow.htm>

10.3 Pat Robertson: Politician of Christian Zionism

Along with Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson is one of the most powerful men in US political and religious circles today.⁵²⁸ His Christian Broadcasting Network was the first and remains the most influential Christian satellite TV network in the world with a budget in excess of \$195 million.⁵²⁹ Robertson founded CBN in 1960. He is also a writer⁵³⁰ and the Founder and Chancellor of Regent University in Virginia as well as numerous other educational, entertainment, political and humanitarian organisations, including the Christian Coalition which has 1.9 million members and a budget in 1997 of \$17 million. The goal of the Christian Coalition, founded by Robertson in 1989, is 'to take working control of the Republican party' and elect 'Christian candidates' to public office.⁵³¹ While claiming to be a 'pro-family citizen action organization' the Christian Coalition nevertheless regularly lobbies the US Government on pro-Israeli issues. In April 2002, for example, it called upon the US Congress to continue supporting Israel's right to 'self defense against Palestinian terrorists and pressure from Yasser Arafat.'⁵³²

In 1990, Robertson founded International Family Entertainment Inc. and The Family Channel, a satellite delivered cable-TV network with 63 million US subscribers. In 1997, Robertson sold IFE to Fox Worldwide Inc. for \$1.9 billion. With such significant investment, CBN is now one of the world's largest television ministries and produces programmes seen in 180 countries and heard in 71 languages including Russian, Arabic, Spanish, French and Chinese. CBN's most popular programme, The 700 Club, which Robertson hosts, is one of the longest running religious television programmes and reaches a weekly audience of seven million American viewers.⁵³³ Robertson explains CBN's role in fulfilling end-time prophecy:

⁵²⁸ Gerard Straub, Salvation for Sale. An Insider's View of Pat Robertson, (Buffalo, New York, Prometheus Books, 1988).

⁵²⁹ <http://www.ecfa.org/MbrProf.asp?MemberID=1040>

⁵³⁰ Pat Robertson, The New Millennium, 10 Trends That Will Impact You and Your Family By The Year 2000, (Dallas, Word, 1990); The Secret Kingdom: Your Path to Peace, Love and Financial Security, (Dallas, Word, 1992).

⁵³¹ People for the American Way, 'Who are on the Religious Right?' http://www.pfaw.org/issues/right/bg_groups.html

⁵³² Christian Coalition of America, 'Christian Coalition Defends Israel Against Arafat' <http://www.cc.org/becomeinformed/pressrelease040502.html>

⁵³³ <http://www.patrobertson.com/Biography/index.asp>

'I will never forget the time, April 29, 1977, when we had built the first earth station ever to be owned by a Christian ministry in the history of the world, and we were the first ever to take a full-time transponder on a satellite ... so we were pioneers in this area. I remember it was ten o'clock in the morning when we went on with the broadcast. We then cut to the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, a little after five o'clock in the afternoon. There were some clouds forming over the Temple Mount ... And when I saw the Mount of Olives, and I saw where my Savior is going to put His foot down when He comes back to earth, I was thinking, "I'm transmitting it!" The Bible says every eye is going to behold Him, and here it is happening! We see how it is going to be fulfilled right in front of our eyes!'⁵³⁴

Events in the Middle East dominate CBN's News and have a clear bias in favour of Israel.⁵³⁵ In 2002, CBN formed its own dedicated Israel news channel with links to the Israeli embassy, International Christian Embassy, Bridges for Peace and Christian Friends of Israel.⁵³⁶ Robertson's own views on Israel and the occupation of the Palestinian West Bank are quite outspoken. Robertson's powerful media network ensures a strongly pro-Israel perspective is presented to millions of Americans on a daily basis. His hope is clearly to be the one to televise the Second Coming.

With the high profile influence of fundamentalist Christian leaders like Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson, by the end of the 1970s, Christian Zionism had become synonymous with American Evangelicalism. Over the past thirty years, this relationship has been sustained with increasing effectiveness to the point where it is rare to find a single politician or senator in Congress willing to express public criticism of the Israeli government.⁵³⁷ The coalition of religious and political support for Israel in America was to receive its most explicit grounding in the prophetic speculations of Hal Lindsey.

10.4 Hal Lindsey: Prophet of Christian Zionism

Hal Lindsey is undoubtedly the most influential of all 20th Century Christian Zionists. Although rarely quoted by others, he has nevertheless been described by Time as 'The Jeremiah for this Generation', and in 1980 by the

⁵³⁴ Skipp Porteous, 'Road to Armageddon' <http://www.ifas.org/fw/9512/robertson.html>

⁵³⁵ Paul Merkley, Christian Attitudes towards the State of Israel, (Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), p200.

⁵³⁶ Christian Broadcasting Network, <http://cbn.org/cbnnews/israel>

⁵³⁷ Wagner, 'Evangelicals', op.cit., pp1020-1026; Halsell, Prophecy, op.cit.,

New York Times as 'The best selling author of the decade.'⁵³⁸ He is one of very few authors to have had three books on the New York Times best seller list simultaneously.⁵³⁹ His latest publisher describes him as 'The Father of the Modern-Day Bible Prophecy Movement',⁵⁴⁰ and 'The best known prophecy teacher in the world.'⁵⁴¹ Lindsey is a prolific writer, the author of at least twenty books spanning 27 years, most of which deal explicitly or implicitly with a dispensational interpretation of the future, biblical prophecy and Christian Zionism.⁵⁴² He hosts his own radio and television programmes,⁵⁴³ leads regular pro-Israeli Holy Land tours, and by subscription makes available a monthly Christian 'intelligence journal' called Countdown as well as the International Intelligence Briefing.⁵⁴⁴ Along with Grant Jeffries, Lindsey also hosts a weekly news programme, International Intelligence Briefing on the Trinity Broadcasting Network television station. It is estimated that through

⁵³⁸ Hal Lindsey, The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon, (New York, Bantam, 1981), p179.

⁵³⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁰ Hal Lindsey, The Final Battle, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1995), back cover.

⁵⁴¹ Hal Lindsey, The Apocalypse Code, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1997), back cover.

⁵⁴² Hal Lindsey, The Late Great Planet Earth, (London, Lakeland, 1970); Satan is Alive and Well on Planet Earth, (London, Lakeland, 1973); There's A New World Coming, A Prophetic Odyssey, (Santa Ana, California, Vision House, 1973); The Liberation of Planet Earth, (London, Lakeland, 1974); The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon, (New York, Bantam, 1981); The Promise, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1982); The Rapture: Truth or Consequences, (New York, Bantam, 1983); The Terminal Generation, (New York, Bantam, 1983); A Prophetical Walk Through the Holy Land, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1983); Israel and the Last Days, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1983); Combat Faith, (1986); The Road to Holocaust, (New York, Bantam, 1989); Planet Earth-2000 AD, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1994); The Final Battle, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1995); Planet Earth-2000 AD, revised edition (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1996); Amazing Grace, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1996); Blood Moon, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1996); The Apocalypse Code, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1997); Planet Earth: The Final Chapter, (Beverly Hills, California, Western Front, 1998); Where is America in Prophecy? video (Murrieta, California, Hal Lindsey Ministries, 2001); Prophetic Review of 2001, compact disk, (Murrieta, California, Hal Lindsey Ministries, 2002); Middle East, Ready for War, video (Murrieta, California, Hal Lindsey Ministries, 2002); Myths of the Middle East, video (Murrieta, California, Hal Lindsey Ministries, 2002); International Intelligence Briefing, (Palos Verdes, California, HLM), monthly journal.

⁵⁴³ Lindsey's weekly radio programme is called 'Week in Review' and is aired by numerous Christian radio stations. <http://www.audiocentral.com/rshows/weekinview/default.html>

radio and TV, Lindsey has a regular weekly audience of one million viewers and listeners.⁵⁴⁵

Lindsey's most famous book, The Late Great Planet Earth has been described by the New York Times as the ' #1 Non-fiction Bestseller of the Decade.' It has gone through more than 108 printings, with sales by 1993 of more than eighteen million copies in English, with estimates varying between eighteen to twenty million further copies in fifty-four foreign languages.⁵⁴⁶ Despite dramatic changes in the world since its publication in 1970, Lindsey maintains that the prophetic and apocalyptic scenario depicted is biblically accurate and therefore the book remains in print in its original unrevised form. Lindsey's popularity may be attributed to a combination of factors. These include his readable, journalistic style of writing, his imaginative if rather dogmatic insistence, like Darby and Scofield,⁵⁴⁷ that contemporary geopolitical events are the fulfilment of biblical prophecy and his repeated assertions that the end of the world is imminent. 'This book describes in more detail and explicitness than any other just what will happen to humanity and to the Earth, not a thousand years from now, but in our lifetime-indeed in this very generation.'⁵⁴⁸

'Hal will be your guide on a chilling tour of the world's future battlefields as the Great Tribulation, foretold more than two thousand years ago by Old and New Testament prophets, begins to unfold. You'll meet the world leaders who will bring man to the very edge of extinction and examine the causes of the current global situation - what it all means, what will shortly come to pass, and how it will all turn out.'⁵⁴⁹

⁵⁴⁴ For more information see <http://www.iib-report.com>

⁵⁴⁵ <http://www.iib-report.com>; <http://www.israelunitycoalition.com>

⁵⁴⁶ Lindsey, Road, op.cit., p195. For other statistics see George Marsden, Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1991), p77, and Michael Lienesch, Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right, (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, North Carolina Press, 1993), p311. See also Gary Friesen, 'A Return Visit', Moody Monthly, May (1988), p30.

⁵⁴⁷ J. N. Darby, 'Evidence from Scripture for the passing away of the present dispensations' Collected., op.cit., Prophetic I, II. p. 108; C. I. Scofield, What do the Prophets Say? (Philadelphia, The Sunday School Times Co, 1918), pp18-19.

⁵⁴⁸ Lindsey, Final., op.cit., p.xiii.

⁵⁴⁹ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., back cover.

Like Darby, Scofield and Brookes,⁵⁵⁰ Lindsey is unwilling to credit anyone else for his ideas, claiming his interpretations were revealed directly and personally by God.

‘I believe that the Spirit of God gave me a special insight, not only into how John described what he actually experienced, but also into how this whole phenomenon encoded the prophecies so that they could be fully understood only when their fulfilment drew near ... I prayerfully sought for a confirmation for my apocalypse code theory.’⁵⁵¹

His success is also in part due to his tendency to revise his predictions in the light of changing world events. So for example, The Final Battle (1994) is essentially an unacknowledged revision of The Late Great Planet Earth (1970); Apocalypse Code (1997) is a revision of There’s a New World Coming (1973); and the two editions of Planet Earth 2000 AD (1994 and 1996) both recycle and revitalise material from The 1980’s Countdown to Armageddon (1980). In keeping pace with history, Lindsey shows that the demise of the Soviet Union; the rise of militant Islam; the success of the Allies in the Gulf War; the Arab-Israeli conflict and even the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre can all be explained in terms of the fulfilment of biblical prophecy and the imminent return of Christ. Lindsey’s apocalyptic scenarios are highly speculative yet continue to enjoy popular support, especially among dispensationalists in the United States. As will be shown in the following chapter, his particular reading of history, coloured by a literal exegesis of highly selective biblical scriptures, is essentially polarised, dualistic, racist and confrontational. For example, Lindsey justifies the continued demonisation of Russia, China, Islam, and the Arab nations; encourages the continued military and economic funding of Israel by the United States; urges Israelis to resist negotiating land for peace and instead, settle and incorporate the Occupied Territories within Israel. In so doing, Lindsey identifies unconditionally with the

⁵⁵⁰ J. N. Darby, ‘Reflections Upon the Prophetic Inquiry, and the Views Advanced in It’, Collected, op.cit., Prophetic I, II, pp6-7; ‘Evidence from Scripture for the passing away of the present dispensations’, Collected, op.cit., Prophetic I, II, p108; C. I. Scofield, ‘Introduction’, The Scofield Reference Bible; (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1909); Clarence B. Bass, Backgrounds to Dispensationalism, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1960), p18; John Gerstner, Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth (Brentwood, Tennessee, Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1991), p43; Brookes, op. cit.; Allis, op.cit., p133.

⁵⁵¹ Lindsey, Apocalypse, op.cit., p37. Compare with Darby, Collected, op.cit., Prophetic I, II, pp6-7, p108.

political and religious far Right, both in the United States and Israel. Ironically, some argue his attempts to defend Israel and to refute anti-Semitism may actually be leading to the very holocaust he abhors but repeatedly predicts.⁵⁵²

These three high profile individuals, Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell and Hal Lindsey are merely the figureheads of a much wider alliance of over 150 influential fundamentalist Christian leaders including Oral Roberts, Mike Evans, Tim LaHaye, Kenneth Copeland, Paul Crouch, James Dobson, Ed McAteer, Jim Bakker, Chuck Missler and Jimmy Swaggart.⁵⁵³ Together they reach an audience of over 100 million Americans weekly through radio and television, enjoy access to the Israeli and American political establishment, and provide virtually unconditional support for Israel today.⁵⁵⁴ Just as Shaftesbury and Hechler used the Bible to help realise the Zionist ambitions of a secular Herzl in the 19th Century, so the American Religious Right of Falwell and Robertson has helped sustain and realise the Zionist agenda of secular Israel in the 20th Century.

11. The Proliferation & Diversification of Christian Zionist Organisations

The earliest Christian Zionist organisations were the London Jews Society (1809) and the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews (1842).⁵⁵⁵ Although now known as the Church's Ministry Among Jewish People (CMJ) and Christian Witness to Israel (CWI), they remain primarily covenantal premillennial in emphasis and evangelistic in purpose. As a result of the influence of J.N. Darby and the growing dispensational network in the USA, William E. Blackstone founded the Chicago Hebrew Mission in 1887. It is now known as the American Messianic Fellowship International (AMFI).

⁵⁵² Gary DeMar and Peter J. Leithart, The Legacy of Hatred Continues: A response to Hal Lindsey's The Road to Holocaust, (Tyler, Texas, Institute for Christian Economics, 1989); D. S. Russell, Prophecy and the Apocalyptic Dream, (Peabody, Massachusetts, Hendrikson, 1994), p86.

⁵⁵³ Regular meetings between Christian Zionist leaders and Israeli officials take place such as at Harvard Business School. At one held in early 2002, participants included Avigdor Itzhaki, the Director General of the Israeli cabinet, James Watt, former Secretary of the Interior, Mike Evans and Richard Hellman of CIPAC. Those invited also included Tony Campolo, James Dobson, Kenneth Copeland, Robert Schuller, Chuck Smith, Joyce Meyers, E.V. Hill and Marlin Maddoux.

⁵⁵⁴ Wagner, 'Evangelicals,' op.cit., pp1020-1026; Dying in the Land of Promise, (London, Melisende, 2001), p23; Grace Halsell, Forcing God's Hand, (Washington, Crossroads International, 1999), pp89-109.

AMFI is, according to its own literature, a 'conservative evangelical ministry committed to seeing the Lord's purposes fulfilled by building bridges of understanding between Christian and Jewish Communities.'⁵⁵⁶ The Messianic Jewish Alliance of America (MJAA) founded in 1915 claims to be the largest association of Messianic Jewish believers in the world. MJAA now has affiliations in 15 countries, 250 Messianic Synagogues, and 350,000 Messianic Jews worldwide. They insist they are 'the leading representative organisation for American Jews who believe in Messiah Yeshua.'⁵⁵⁷ Their simple statement of belief is made up of four short paragraphs. The fourth states: 'We believe in G-d's eternal covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We therefore stand with and support the Jewish people and the State of Israel and hold fast to the Biblical heritage of our forefathers.'⁵⁵⁸ In 1992 a MJAA position paper was published in the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz entitled, 'Messianic Jews Say: "The Land Belongs to Israel."⁵⁵⁹ In it, MJAA expressed their conviction that Eretz Israel has been given to the Jews by God and that they will 'repossess the regions of Judea, Samaria, Gaza and the Golan Heights.'⁵⁶⁰ Like the AMFI, MJAA are dispensational in origin and both are committed to both evangelistic and political activism. Jews for Jesus, founded in 1973, is the most overtly evangelistic expression of this form of Messianic Dispensationalism.

Since 1970, influenced by the Apocalyptic Dispensationalism of John Walvoord, Hal Lindsey and Tim LaHaye, Christian Zionism has become more politicised and identified with Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson's campaign lobbying on various pro-Israeli issues such as the status of Jerusalem. Some of the largest and most influential Christian Zionist agencies have redefined their Christian message to that of 'blessing Israel' and have disavowed evangelism in order to gain recognition from the Israeli government, set up

⁵⁵⁵ Christian Witness to Israel, <http://cwi.org.uk/faq.html>

⁵⁵⁶ American Messianic Fellowship International, 'What is AMF?' <http://www.mjaa.org>

⁵⁵⁷ The Messianic Jewish Alliance of America (MJAA), 'What is the MJAA?' <http://www.mjaa.org>

⁵⁵⁸ MJAA, 'What does MJAA believe?' <http://http://www.mjaa.org>

⁵⁵⁹ MJAA Position Paper, 'Messianic Jews Say: "The Land Belongs to Israel!"' Ha'aretz, 20 March (1992), cited on <http://www.mjaa.org>

headquarters in Jerusalem and collaborate with Jewish Zionist organisations. Contemporary Christian Zionism may therefore be classified not only in terms of being covenantal or dispensational but also as either primarily evangelistic or political. Since 1980 there has been a dramatic proliferation of such organisations. Doug Kreiger, for example, lists over 250 pro-Israeli evangelical organisations operating in America and founded between 1980 and 1985 alone.⁵⁶¹ Contemporary Christian Zionism is, however, dominated by the activities of a small number of para-church, non-denominational organisations which have successfully galvanised grass roots evangelical political support for Israel. This summary will seek to place the most influential Christian Zionist organisations within their wider historical context.

11.1 London Jews Society: Covenantal Premillennialism (1809)

The first Christian Zionist organisation was the London Jews Society founded in 1809. The LJS was renamed several times in the 20th Century and is now known as the Church's Ministry Among Jewish People (CMJ). In Israel it is known as the Israel Trust of the Anglican Church (ITAC).⁵⁶² Besides being the first, it remains the only denominational Christian Zionist organisation of significance today. Originally an interdenominational body, it was reconstituted in 1815 as an Anglican missionary society under the influence of Charles Simeon. The primary aim was the conversion of Jews to Protestant Christianity.⁵⁶³ The LJS reached its zenith in 1914 when it had a staff of 280 working in 60 cities, a third of whom were of Jewish origin. Following the Napoleonic wars, and beginning in 1817, LJS appointed staff among Jewish communities in places as diverse as Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Holland, Germany, Austria, Romania, India and Canada, as

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁶¹ Halsell, *Prophecy*, op.cit., p178.

⁵⁶² W. T. Gidney, *The History of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews, from 1809 to 1908*, (London, 1908); George H. Stevens, *Go, Tell My Brethren: A Short Popular History of Church Missions to Jews*, (London, Olive Press, 1959); Kelvin Crombie, *For the Love of Zion: Christian Witness and the Restoration of Israel*, (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1991). See also Muriel Corey, *From Rabbi to Bishop*, (London: Olive Press, n.d.).

⁵⁶³ <http://www.cmj.org.uk/whoare.html>

well as in Britain and Palestine.⁵⁶⁴ LJS withdrew most of their European staff as a result of the Second World War, when they claim 250,000 Jewish Christians died in the Holocaust.⁵⁶⁵

CMJ remains committed 'to be workers with God in his continuing purpose for the Jewish people.' This includes evangelism, humanitarian work and defending Jews from anti-Semitism.⁵⁶⁶ It has also retained an unswerving commitment to Restorationism. Kelvin Crombie summarises this in his history of CMJ in which he equates biblical literalism with Restorationism: 'For if the Bible is true, literally, then Israel would be restored, first physically, then spiritually. The CMJ work in Israel was founded during the last Century upon such a belief. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 was surely an indication that such beliefs were correct.'⁵⁶⁷ While not an official position of CMJ, they nevertheless advocate that the birth of the State of Israel and Restorationism are the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy and should be supported.⁵⁶⁸ Theologically, CMJ remain convinced that God continues to have an ongoing covenant relationship with the Jews who remain God's 'chosen people'.⁵⁶⁹ CMJ requires no specific eschatological view of its staff, however its publications still broadly reflect the Historic or Covenantal Premillennialism of its founders although some leaders, such as E. L. Langston, General Secretary in 1914, advocated Dispensationalism.⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁴ Stevens, op.cit., pp23-106.

⁵⁶⁵ Jos Drummond, 'Mission in the 1990's' The Church's Ministry Among the Jews (St. Albans, CMJ, 1989).

⁵⁶⁶ CMJ, Shalom, 3 (1999), p1.

⁵⁶⁷ Crombie, op.cit., pp257-258.

⁵⁶⁸ Rob Richards, Has God Finished with Israel?, (Crowborough, Monarch/Olive Press, 1994) pp209-210; 'Welcome to CMJ', Shalom, February (1990), p2; CMJ, The State of Israel: Why should we support it? (St Albans, CMJ, 1996).

⁵⁶⁹ Tony Higton, 'Meet the new management team' Shalom, 2 (1999), p3.

⁵⁷⁰ E.L. Langston, Ominous Days! Or the Signs of the Times, (London, Chas. J. Thynne, 1914), pp1-30; See also Patricia Higton, 'Return of the King of Kings' Shalom Overview Edition, (2001) in which David Brickner's Future Hope is recommended. Brickner is director

11.2 Jews for Jesus: Messianic Dispensationalism (1973)

Jews for Jesus (JFJ) was founded in 1973 by Moishe Rosen⁵⁷¹ an ordained Baptist minister⁵⁷² and arose out of the Californian hippy culture Jesus movement of the 1960s and early 1970s.⁵⁷³ In the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco from where Jews for Jesus was born, Time magazine estimated that 30% of hippies were Jewish while Moishe Rosen believes 20% of the Jesus People were also.⁵⁷⁴ JFJ claim to be ‘... the largest and best-known of the non-denominational Jewish evangelistic agencies’ with missionaries in ten countries and an income in 2000 of more than \$12 million.⁵⁷⁵ While identifying itself as ‘evangelical fundamentalist’ JFJ enjoys the support of conservative evangelicals such as Dr. J.I. Packer.⁵⁷⁶ In addition to their fifteen branches and sixty chapters, JFJ sends out evangelistic teams such as the emotively named ‘Liberated Wailing Wall’.⁵⁷⁷ Their founder Moishe Rosen, executive director, David Brickner and scholar in residence, Louis Goldberg are all classical dispensationalists. Their Doctrinal Statement reflects this, asserting belief in the continuing existence of two parallel but separate covenants for Israel and the Church: ‘We believe Israel exists as a covenant people through whom God continues to accomplish His purposes and that the Church is an elect people in accordance with the New Covenant, comprising both Jews and Gentiles.’ With a similar ministry philosophy to that of Campus Crusade for Christ, Young Life and the Navigators, Jews for Jesus represents a robustly evangelistic form of dispensational Premillennialism. As an organisation of Messianic Christians committed to both evangelism among Jews as well as Restorationism, JFJ are unique, having, in their own words, ‘Out-Zioned the Zionists’.⁵⁷⁸

of Jews for Jesus and a dispensationalist.

⁵⁷¹ Moishe Rosen, Overture to Armageddon? Beyond the Gulf War, (San Bernardino, California, Here's Life Publishers, 1991).

⁵⁷² Ruth Tucker, Not Ashamed, the Story of Jews for Jesus, (Sisters, Oregon, Multnomah, 1999), p240.

⁵⁷³ Ibid., pp77-92.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid., p78.

⁵⁷⁵ <http://www.ecfa.org/MbrProf.asp?MemberID=207>

⁵⁷⁶ Tucker, op.cit., p239; ‘Foreword’.

⁵⁷⁷ Jews for Jesus, “‘Billy Graham was Misunderstood’ Says Jews for Jesus Leader’, Briefing Bulletin, <http://www.jews-for-jesus.org>

⁵⁷⁸ Louis Goldberg, ‘Whose Land Is It?’ Issues, 4.2.

11.3 Bridges For Peace: Political Dispensationalism (1976)

Bridges for Peace (BFP) was founded in 1976 by G. Douglas Young. Young had worked in Israel since the 1950s, founding the Israel-American Institute of Biblical Studies in Jerusalem in 1957. In 1976, he also began to publish his 'Dispatch from Jerusalem' a monthly newsletter distributed by an organisation called Christians for Israel, based in Dallas. After Young's death, Clarence H. Wagner became the President and first Executive Director of Bridges for Peace in 1980.⁵⁷⁹ BFP affirm: 'Through programs both in Israel and world-wide, we are giving Christians the opportunity to actively express our biblical responsibility before God to be faithful to Israel and the Jewish community.'⁵⁸⁰ This 'biblical responsibility' does not include Jewish evangelism since they claim the promises made to Israel were both prior to and independent of the Church. 'The Church does not exist independently from the covenant God made with the Jewish people and Israel.'⁵⁸¹ BFP also hold to the dispensational view that 'God's covenant promises between the land and His people Israel were everlasting and unconditional.'⁵⁸² Most commentators understand the reference in Ephesians 2:14-18 to Jesus making 'the two one' as describing how he has broken down the wall of hostility between Jews and Gentiles by his death. Wagner, however, claims this passage describes the ministry of BFP bringing reconciliation between the State of Israel and the Church.⁵⁸³ BFP is therefore one of the most politicised Christian Zionist organisations with a budget, in the year 2000 of just under \$3 million and a membership of 90,000.⁵⁸⁴ Having disavowed evangelism they are instead active through 'Operation Rescue' in encouraging Jews from the former Soviet Union to emigrate to Israel. Merkley claims: 'All of the Christian Zionist organizations acknowledge Dr. Douglas Young as their pioneer and Bridges

⁵⁷⁹ Merkley, op.cit., p168.

⁵⁸⁰ Clarence H. Wagner, 'Who are we?' *Bridges for Peace*, Jerusalem. September (1996).

⁵⁸¹ Clarence H. Wagner, 'Israel and the Church at the Dawn of the New Millennium.'

<http://www.bridgesforpeace.com/publications/teaching/Article-18.html>

⁵⁸² Clarence H. Wagner, 'Did God break his covenant with the Jews?'

<http://www.bridgesforpeace.com/publications/teaching/Article-19.html>

⁵⁸³ Clarence H. Wagner, 'God's covenants, and the Church'

<http://www.bridgesforpeace.com/publications/teaching/Article-38.html>

⁵⁸⁴ <http://www.ecfa.org/MbrProf.asp?MemberID=1092>; <http://www.israelunitycoalition.com>

for Peace, under the leadership of Clarence Wagner, Jr, as the senior organization in the ranks of renewed Christian Zionism.⁵⁸⁵ BFP works in partnership with the International Christian Embassy and forms part of the National Unity Coalition for Israel.

11.4 International Christian Embassy: Political Dispensationalism (1980)

Of all the Christian Zionist organisations, ICEJ is probably the most influential and controversial with representatives in 140 countries. According to the New York Times its budget in 1999 exceeded \$8 million per year raised from a membership of 100,000.⁵⁸⁶ In 1980, the Israeli Knesset unilaterally declared Jerusalem to be the eternal and undivided capital of Israel. As a result, the Dutch embassy and the twelve remaining Latin American governments finally vacated their premises in Jerusalem. Whether responding to the threat of an oil embargo, or from a desire to uphold international law, they joined the other foreign embassies, which had relocated to Tel Aviv in 1967. In response to worldwide condemnation of Israel's unilateral action, Christian Zionists meeting in Jerusalem that summer founded the International Christian Embassy, to demonstrate solidarity with Israel in response to what they saw as the world abandoning her. Jan Willem van der Hoeven who became the ICEJ's chief spokesman, described their decision to be 'a direct response to the world's cowardice and shameful rejection of Israel's right to her unified city.'⁵⁸⁷

'We believe it is God's desire that Christians across the world be encouraged and inspired to arise to their prophetic role in the restoration of Israel. The Bible says that the destiny of the nations, of Christians and of the Church is linked to the way they respond to this work of restoration ... We believe that Christians must take a stand against anti-Israel and anti-Semitic prejudices, and counter lies with truth. As such, our approach may at times involve political stands, but these ultimately arise from biblical principles and convictions. We are compelled by our faith to help protect the Lord's people and to help preserve them for that time when the Lord will fulfill all of His promises to them'.⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸⁵ Merkley, op.cit., p170.

⁵⁸⁶ <http://www.library.cornell.edu/colldev/mideast/succoth.htm>;
<http://www.israelunitycoalition.com>

⁵⁸⁷ Jan Willem van der Hoeven, Babylon or Jerusalem? (Shippensburg, Pasadena, Destiny Image Publishers, 1993), pp151-152, 158.

⁵⁸⁸ International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem.

In 1993, the ICEJ had an international staff of 50 representing 12 different nationalities, together with a further 250 volunteers who assisted with annual events such as the Feast of Tabernacles Celebration. ICEJ 'ambassadors' also serve in over 100 countries world-wide through a network of branches, national directors and regional boards working under the authority of its Jerusalem Executive.⁵⁸⁹ The ICEJ is strongest in the USA, Canada and South Africa and also operates in Sweden, Germany and Singapore with offices in other European, Asian and Central American countries, which they claim are experiencing 'a tremendous move of the Holy Spirit.'⁵⁹⁰ The ICEJ draws its support almost exclusively from charismatic and evangelical fundamentalist Christians. Based on their literal interpretation of the Bible, they 'have very warm feelings toward Israel.'⁵⁹¹ Their main priority is to 'bring comfort' to Israel. They achieve this by encouraging Soviet and Eastern European Jews to emigrate to Israel; facilitating a social assistance programme integrating Jewish immigrants into Israeli life; sponsoring an annual Christian Zionist Feast of Tabernacles celebration in Jerusalem; and Diplomatic Banquets and Receptions through which church leaders and government officials around the world are lobbied on behalf of the State of Israel. By 1998, for example, of the 700,000 immigrants to Israel from the former Soviet Union, ICEJ claim to have funded the travel of 40,000 Jews, sponsoring over 50 flights as well as coaches via Finland.⁵⁹²

The ICEJ has also developed a sophisticated news service which produces weekly radio and video programmes broadcast on four continents, together with newsletters, e-news and periodicals such as the Middle East Intelligence Digest, a pro-Israeli summary of Israeli and Arab newspapers and journals. These are aimed, according to Jan Willem van der Hoeven, at countering 'increasingly warped and twisted' coverage, which has a 'marked

<http://www.icej.org.il/pages/home/aboutus.html>

⁵⁸⁹ International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, (Jerusalem, ICEJ, 1993), p4.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁹¹ Ibid., p25.

⁵⁹² Merkley, op.cit., p173.

bias against Israel.⁵⁹³ In the USA, the ICEJ works closely with political lobbyists such as the Christian Israel Public Action Campaign (CIPAC) to which ICEJ is affiliated, as well as to Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network and The National Unity Coalition for Israel.⁵⁹⁴ It is claimed that funds from the ICEJ have been used to support illegal Jewish settlements⁵⁹⁵ as well as the Jerusalem Temple Foundation (JTF) founded by Terry Reisenhoover and Stanley Goldfoot, a former member of the Stern Gang. The JTF is committed to the destruction of the Dome of the Rock and rebuilding of the Jewish Temple.⁵⁹⁶ At the Third International Christian Zionist Congress held in Jerusalem 25-29 February, 1996, under the auspices of the ICEJ, some 1,500 delegates from over 40 countries unanimously affirmed a highly politicised proclamation of Christian Zionism which included the affirmation:

‘God the Father, Almighty, chose the ancient nation and people of Israel, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to reveal His plan of redemption for the world. They remain elect of God, and without the Jewish nation His redemptive purposes for the world will not be completed.’⁵⁹⁷

The declaration went on to commit delegates to assist Jewish people to emigrate to Israel and affirmed Israel's right to occupy and settle ‘Judea, Samaria, Gaza and the Golan.’⁵⁹⁸

Some critics have argued that the ICEJ has reinterpreted the Christian message and made the teachings of Jesus subservient to a political Zionist ideology.⁵⁹⁹ In doing so, it has obscured the call to reconciliation and exacerbated the tensions between Palestinians and Israelis. The ICEJ is also a self-appointed and self-regulated organisation unaccountable to the wider

⁵⁹³ Felix Corley, ‘Is Radical Zionism an Option for Christians?’ Church of England Newspaper, 7 February (1997), p7.

⁵⁹⁴ International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, op.cit., p25.

⁵⁹⁵ Wagner, Dying, op.cit., p23.

⁵⁹⁶ Louis Rapoport, ‘Slouching towards Armageddon: Links with evangelicals’ Jerusalem Post International Edition, June 17-24, (1984); Grace Halsell, Prophecy and Politics, Militant Evangelists on the Road to Nuclear War, (Westport, Connecticut, Lawrence Hill, 1986), pp96-116; See also Charisma, July (1995), pp63, 88-89.

⁵⁹⁷ International Christian Zionist Congress Proclamation, International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem. 25-29 February 1996.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁹ MECC, op. cit; Wagner, Anxious, op.cit., pp96-113.

Christian community.⁶⁰⁰ In May 1998, because of tensions with the board of ICEJ and its director Johann Luckhoff, Jan Willem van der Hoeven left ICEJ to set up a rival organisation, the International Christian Zionist Center in Jerusalem.⁶⁰¹ In 1999, the Canadian Friends of the International Christian Embassy also changed their name to Christian Action for Israel and are no longer listed on the ICEJ website.⁶⁰² Similar disagreements during the First International Christian Zionist Congress held in Basle in 1985 led some members of ICEJ to leave and form Christian Friends of Israel.

11.5 Christian Friends of Israel – Humanitarian Christian Zionism (1985)

Christian Friends of Israel (CFI) was founded by Derek White and other ex-members of ICEJ from the UK, USA, France and Israel in December 1985. Other leading Christian Zionists associated with CFI include Lance Lambert,⁶⁰³ Derek Prince,⁶⁰⁴ Barry Segal,⁶⁰⁵ and Dave Dolan who produces CFI's monthly Middle East Digest.⁶⁰⁶ CFI likewise insists on the unconditional necessity of 'Standing with Israel' and bringing blessing to her as a nation, though in their case, they claim, primarily through prayer and humanitarian projects rather than by evangelism or political action:

'We believe the Lord Jesus is both Messiah of Israel and Saviour of the world; however, our stand alongside Israel is not conditional upon her acceptance of our belief. The Bible teaches that Israel (people, land, nation) has a Divinely ordained and glorious future, and that God has neither rejected nor replaced His Jewish people.'⁶⁰⁷

CFI see themselves as primarily 'a humanitarian organisation' in contrast to ICEJ which it regards as 'a religious-political organisation'.⁶⁰⁸ Nevertheless,

⁶⁰⁰ Wagner, Anxious, op.cit., pp109-113.

⁶⁰¹ <http://www.israelmybeloved.com/about/organization.htm>

⁶⁰² <http://www.christianactionforisrael.org>

⁶⁰³ Lance Lambert, The Battle for Israel, (Eastbourne, Kingsway, 1975); The Uniqueness of Israel, (Eastbourne, Kingsway, 1980).

⁶⁰⁴ Derek Prince, The Last Word of the Middle East, (Fort Lauderdale, Derek Prince Ministries International, 1982); The Destiny of Israel and the Church, (Milton Keynes, Word, 1992).

⁶⁰⁵ http://www.remnantofisrael.com/radio_programs.htm

⁶⁰⁶ Dave Dolan, Israel in Crisis, What Lies Ahead? (Colorado Springs, Oracle House, 2000); The End of Days (Tappen, New Jersey, Revell, 1997), <http://www.ddolan.com>

⁶⁰⁷ Christian Friends of Israel, Standing with Israel, information leaflet, n.d.

⁶⁰⁸ Hannelle Sorensen, director of CFI on the East Coast of the USA cited in Merkley op.cit., p180.

its monthly News Letter and website make strong political statements in support of Israel. For example, in 'Myths and Facts' published in April 2000, Derek White argues: 'The propaganda line that Judea, Samaria, and Gaza are "Occupied Arab lands" or "Palestinian lands occupied in 1967" is just one of the myths requiring clarification for the sake of those that remain confused regarding the history of the region.'⁶⁰⁹ Christian Friends of Israel, though international in scope, is probably the most politically active and influential Christian Zionist organisation in Britain.

These Christian leaders and their organisations have regular access to over 100 million American Christians, more than 100,000 pastors and combined budgets of well in excess of \$300 million per annum. In varying degrees, and for a variety of reasons, they nevertheless form a broad and immensely powerful coalition which is both shaping and driving Christian Zionist support for Israel today.

12. The Historical Roots of Christian Zionism: Conclusions

This chapter has traced the emergence of Christian Zionism as a movement from the early 19th Century and its transition from British sectarianism to mainstream American Evangelicalism.

12.1 British Evangelicalism and Restorationism

Five key factors led to the rise of the Christian Zionist movement in Britain.

1. With war and revolution consuming much of Europe and America, the optimistic eschatology of 18th Century Postmillennialism was severely undermined.
2. A resurgence of Premillennialism based on a literalist hermeneutic and futurist eschatology emerged through the influence of Lewis Way, Edward Irving and John Nelson Darby and those associated with the Albury and Powerscourt prophecy conferences.
3. Several evangelical missionary societies such as the LJS were formed to provide education and humanitarian assistance as well as share the gospel with Jewish people. Through the efforts of leaders such as

⁶⁰⁹ Derek White, 'Myths and Facts' Christian Friends of Israel News Letter, 113. April-May (2002).

Charles Simeon and Charles Spurgeon the idea of active British involvement in the restoration of the Jews to Palestine also took shape.

4. Their theological ideas were translated into political reality through the zealous efforts of British politicians such as Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Palmerston, David Lloyd George and Lord Balfour who saw the strategic value of a Jewish State in Palestine.
5. The Jewish Zionist movement itself grew in no small measure due to the involvement of Christian restorationists such as William Hechler. Zionism eventually gained international recognition through the Balfour Declaration, which in 1917, finally guaranteed a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

12.2 American Evangelicalism and Christian Zionism

Christian Zionism has become a dominant factor within American Evangelicalism as a result of five additional factors.

1. Following frequent visits by J.N. Darby from the 1850s, his radical dispensational ideas about a failing Church and revived Israel, as well as rigid separation between them in eternity, began to gain ground within the American evangelical establishment.
2. It was principally through the influence of James Brookes, D.L. Moody, Cyrus Scofield and William Blackstone together with the prophecy conferences and Bible schools which they founded that Christian Zionism became indigenous to American Evangelicalism during the latter half of the 19th Century.
3. The Scofield Reference Bible became the standard text of Christian Zionism by systematising and legitimising the hermeneutics of Dispensationalism as well as the futurist application of ancient biblical prophecies to the contemporary Jewish people.
4. The theological justification of Christian Zionism was provided by Lewis Sperry Chafer, Charles Ryrie, John Walvoord and the other faculty of dispensational institutions such as Dallas Theological Seminary and the Moody Bible Institute.
5. Contemporary Christian Zionism has evolved into three discrete strands through the apocalyptic writings of Hal Lindsey and Tim

LaHaye, Messianic agencies such as Jews for Jesus and pro-Israeli political organisations such as the International Christian Embassy and those associated with Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell.

British and American Christian Zionism has grown as a movement through the influence of these factors, individuals, and organisations.

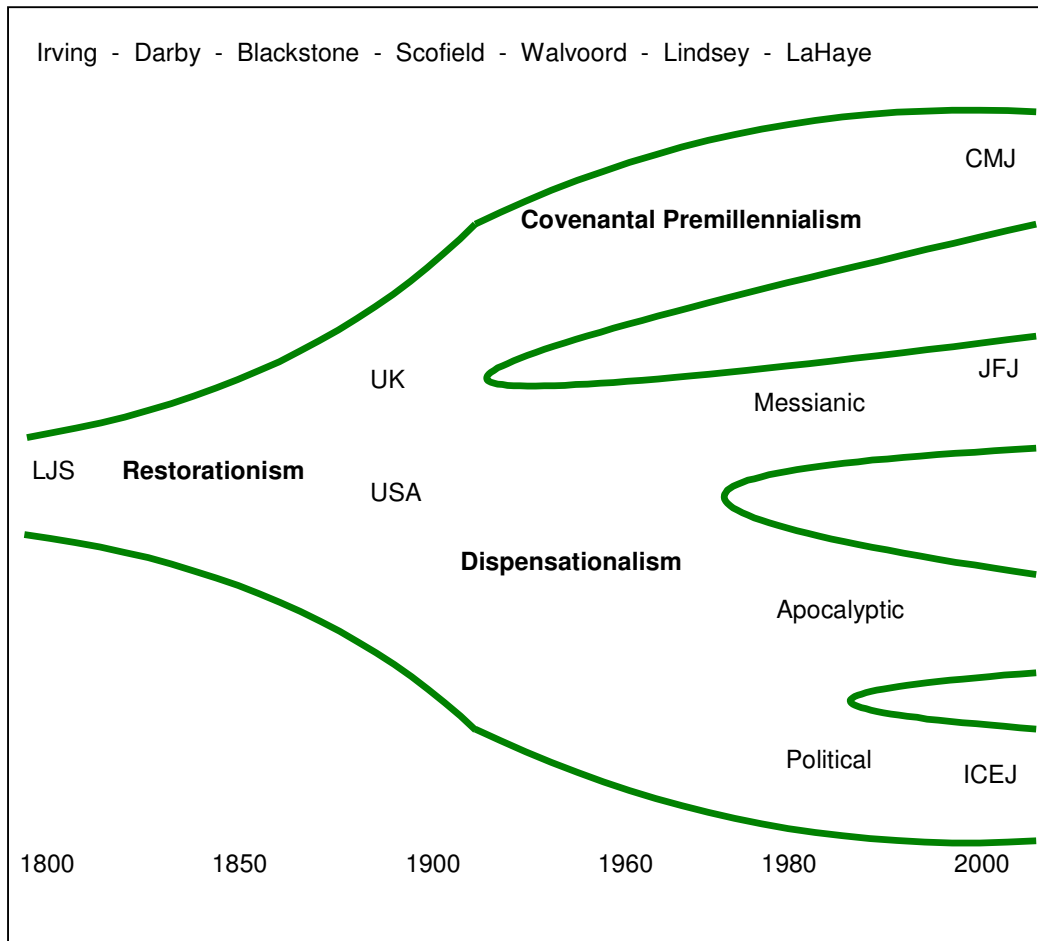


Figure 1. The historical development of Christian Zionism

Figure 1 provides a simplified illustration of the historical development of Christian Zionism from 1800. The next two chapters will appraise the distinctive theological emphasis of Christian Zionism and then assess its political agenda and consequences.

Chapter 3: The Theological Emphases of Christian Zionism

This chapter will assess seven essential doctrines that form the theological basis of evangelical Christian Zionism. Christian Zionism is founded first of all upon a literal and futurist interpretation of the Bible which leads proponents to distinguish between references to Israel and the Church. Injunctions and promises concerning the ancient Jews are applied to the contemporary State of Israel rather than to the Church. From this hermeneutic flows the conviction that the Jews remain God's 'chosen people', distinct from the Church, whether until the end of the millennium as held by covenant premillennialists, or into eternity as affirmed by most dispensationalists. God's end-time purpose for the Jews is expressed in Restorationism. The destiny of the Jewish people is to return to the land of Israel and reclaim their inheritance promised to Abraham and his descendants for ever. This inheritance extends from the River of Egypt to the Euphrates. Within their land, Jerusalem is recognised to be their exclusive, undivided and eternal capital, and therefore it cannot be shared or divided. At the heart of Jerusalem will be the rebuilt Jewish Temple to which all the nations will come to worship God. Just prior to the return of Jesus, there will be seven years of calamities and war known as the Tribulation which will culminate in a great battle called Armageddon during which the godless forces opposed to both God and Israel will be defeated.⁶¹⁰ Jesus will then return as the Jewish Messiah and king to reign in Jerusalem for a thousand years and the Jewish people will enjoy a privileged status and role in the world. Each of these seven doctrines will be considered in turn.

1. The Bible: A Literal Futurist Hermeneutic

An analysis of the contrasting methods of biblical interpretation associated with Alexandria, Antioch, Wittenburg and Zurich falls beyond the scope of this

⁶¹⁰ Most dispensationalists, (but not covenant premillennialists) also believe in the Rapture when Christians will be removed from the earth either prior to, during or after the Tribulation – hence three sub divisions within Dispensationalism – Pre-Trib, Mid-Trib and Post-Tribulationists. See Marvin Rosenthal, The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church, (Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 1990).

thesis.⁶¹¹ For an appraisal of developments within Protestant biblical interpretation see John Goldingay,⁶¹² Bernard Ramm,⁶¹³ D.A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge⁶¹⁴ and also Howard Marshall.⁶¹⁵

Christian Zionism is constructed upon a novel hermeneutic in which all scripture is generally interpreted in an ultra-literal sense; the prophetic parts of scripture are seen as pre-written history; and eschatologically are believed to find their fulfilment in the interpreter's generation. This type of hermeneutic has been described as 'pesher' from the Aramaic for 'interpretation'.⁶¹⁶ This differs from a traditional Protestant hermeneutic which, while also based on literalism, nevertheless begins with the setting of the author as well as recipients and is also shaped by the historical, cultural, grammatical and theological context.⁶¹⁷

As has already been shown, the origin of this literalist hermeneutic can be traced to the early 19th Century and in particular to the writings of Hatley Frere, George Faber, Lewis Way, Edward Irving and those who attended the Albury conferences from 1826.⁶¹⁸ Bebbington argues,

'There is a tight logical connection between high hopes for the Jews and a new estimate of scripture ... The beginning of the innovatory interpretation can be located precisely ... innovations in the fields of prophecy and understanding of scripture went hand in hand.'⁶¹⁹

⁶¹¹ Telford Work, 'The Confession of Christ as Hermeneutical Norm' A paper presented at the Tenth Annual Wheaton Theology Conference, 5th April (2001).

⁶¹² John Goldingay, Models of the Interpretation of Scripture, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1995).

⁶¹³ Bernard Ramm, Protestant Biblical Interpretation, A Textbook of Hermeneutics, 3rd edition, (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1970). See also J.I. Packer, Fundamentalism and the Word of God, (London, Inter-Varsity, 1958); Peter Cotterell & Max Turner, Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation, (London, SPCK, 1989).

⁶¹⁴ D.A. Carson & John D. Woodbridge, eds., Scripture and Truth, (Leicester, Inter-Varsity Press, 1983); eds., Hermeneutics, Authority and Canon, (Leicester, Inter-Varsity, 1986).

⁶¹⁵ I. Howard Marshall, ed., New Testament Interpretation, Essays in Principles and Methods, (Exeter, Paternoster, 1977).

⁶¹⁶ Richard Kyle, The Last Days are Here Again, A History of the End Times, (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1998), p199.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid.

⁶¹⁸ D. W. Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, A History from the 1730's to the 1980's, (London, Unwin Hyman, 1989), p88; Edward Miller, The History and Doctrines of Irvingism, volume 1 (London, Kegan Paul, 1878), p36; Lewis Way, The Latter Rain, 2nd edition (London, 1821).

⁶¹⁹ Bebbington, op.cit., p88.

Patterson describes how Albury's premillennial system redefined revelation in historicist terms, 'from the self giving of God in history to an interpretation of history'.

'The French Revolution became the key to understanding God's revelation, not only as a point of temporal triangulation, but as an unveiling of the very spiritual issues at work in the Last Days. The French Revolution unveiled the fact that prophecy and history were inextricably and beautifully interlaced ... Thus Albury looked to history to discern this principle and history again to see it manifested ... The malleable character of prophecy allowed the scriptures and history to assume the very shape determined by the Albury presuppositions and literal typical hermeneutic ... a self perpetuating system in which theory, scripture and history combined in ever tightening symmetry, to form a system that explained each constituent part in terms of a single narrative and teleology.'⁶²⁰

John Nelson Darby, who subsequently pioneered this hermeneutic in a more explicitly futurist and dispensational form, summed it up in one sentence when he admitted, 'I prefer quoting many passages than enlarging upon them.'⁶²¹ Based on his commitment to literalism, Darby formulated the doctrine of Dispensationalism and the rigid distinction between Israel and the Church which forms the basis of much contemporary Christian Zionism. Following Darby closely, it was Cyrus Scofield who first distilled and codified this literalist hermeneutic. An analysis of Scofield's distinctive understanding of literalism will lead to an examination of the ways in which others have developed and applied this hermeneutic. An appraisal of literalism will then show how it has evolved; utilises symbolism; on occasions is self contradictory; relies on enhancements of the biblical text; and leads to arbitrary conclusions.

1.1. Darby's Innovative Dispensationalism

Central to Dispensationalism is the assumption that seven dispensations are self-evident in biblical history, if a literal hermeneutic is applied consistently. Darby was not the first to discover dispensations within biblical history, nor as will be shown, was his own scheme necessarily the clearest, or universally

⁶²⁰ Mark Rayburn Patterson, Designing the Last Days: Edward Irving, the Albury Circle and the Theology of the Morning Watch. PhD. Kings College, London, 2001, pp117, 166.

⁶²¹ Darby, Collected Writings, edited by William Kelly (Kingston on Thames, Stow Hill

accepted even within Brethren circles.⁶²² However, with the death of Irving and the cessation of the Morning Watch, Darby's scheme, with its rigid distinction between Israel and the Church, came to dominate dispensational thinking. Prior to the rise of Dispensationalism it was common to divide history into two or three dispensations. Jonathan Edwards had acknowledged the lack of unanimity even on the distinction between the Old and New Testaments. 'There is, perhaps, no part of divinity attended with so much intricacy, and wherein orthodox divines so much differ, as in stating the precise agreement and difference between the two dispensations of Moses and Christ.'⁶²³ In his principal work on the dispensations published in 1823, George Faber distinguished three stages in God's gracious dealing with mankind: Patriarchal, Levitical, and Christian. However, unlike Darby, he did not regard them as necessarily consecutive nor was each a remedy for the failure of the previous, 'From the time of the fall down to the termination of the world, man lives under one and the same system of divine grace, a system, which was rendered necessary for him by the very circumstances of the fall, and which therefore at no one period can differ essentially from itself.'⁶²⁴

Irving was also using the term dispensation to contrast God's contemporary dealings with Israel and the Church by 1828.⁶²⁵ Edward Miller quotes Irving's notes of the first Albury conference: 'perfect unanimity on the following ... that the Christian Dispensation was to be terminated, ending in the destruction of the visible Church, like the Jewish; during which "judgements" the Jews were to be restored to Palestine.'⁶²⁶

The clearest expression of Darby's thinking on the dispensations is to be found in 'The Apostasy of the Successive Dispensations' published in The

Bible and Trust Depot, 1962) 11, p363.

⁶²² Ryrie attempts, unconvincingly, to show that the idea of dispensations were latent in the writings of the French mystic Pierre Poiret (1646-1719); an amillennial Calvinist John Edwards (1639-1716) and Isaac Watts (1674-1748). See Ryrie, Dispensationalism, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1995), pp. 65-71.

⁶²³ Jonathan Edwards, 'On Full Communion', The Complete Works of Jonathan Edwards, volume 1 (Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 1974), p160.

⁶²⁴ George Stanley Faber, 'On the peculiar genius of the three dispensations, Patriarchal, Levitical, and Christian,' A Treatise on the Genius and Object of the Patriarchal, the Levitical and the Christian Dispensations, (London, C & J. Rivington, 1823), p2.

⁶²⁵ Edward Irving, The Last Days A Discourse on the Evil Character of These Our Times, Proving Them to be The 'Perilous Times' and the 'Last Days', (London, James Nisbit, 1850), p10.

Christian Witness in October 1836. Darby introduces his dispensational framework in these terms:

‘The detail of the history connected with these dispensations brings out many most interesting displays ... But the dispensations themselves all declare some leading principle or interference of God, some condition in which He has placed man, principles which in themselves are everlastingly sanctioned of God, but in the course of these dispensations placed responsibly in the hands of man for the display and discovery of what he was, and the bringing in their infallible establishment in Him to whom the glory of them all rightly belonged ... In every instance, there was a total and immediate failure as regarded man, however the patience of God might tolerate and carry on by grace the dispensation in which man has thus failed in the outset; and further, that there is no instance of the restoration of a dispensation afforded us, though there might be partial revivals of it through faith.’⁶²⁷

It may be shown, however, by a comparison with an article on the dispensations which appeared in Drummond’s journal, the Morning Watch in 1831 that the Albury Circle had a much clearer and more logical dispensational framework than Darby. The Morning Watch article is both succinct and logical, based on the seven days of creation:

‘As he created all things in six days, and rested on the seventh, hallowing it, so has he ordained in six successive ages to work out the work of all new creation, and added a seventh age as an eternal one, the age of rest and sanctified glory. These seven ages are, 1. The age before the fall, or Adam age; 2. The age until the flood, or Noah age; 3. the age until the deliverance of the church, or Patriarchal age; 4. the age of the Jewish church; 5. the age of the Gentile church; 6. the age of the Millennial church; and 7. the age of the resurrection church.’⁶²⁸

The following is the first and clearest description of the Dispensations to be found in Darby’s writings, published five years after the Morning Watch article appeared:

The paradisaical state cannot properly perhaps be called a dispensation in this sense of the word; but as regards the universal failure of man; it is a most important instance... Corruption, disorder, violence were the consequences of this, until the Lord destroyed the first world created... Here dispensations, properly speaking, begin. On

⁶²⁶ Edward Miller, The History and Doctrines of Irvingism, (London, 1878).

⁶²⁷ J. N. Darby, ‘The Apostasy of the Successive Dispensations.’ The Collected Writings of J. N. Darby, Vol. 2, Ecclesiastical No. 1. William Kelly, ed. (Kingston on Thames, Stow Hill Bible and Trust Depot, 1962). p124.

⁶²⁸ ‘The Seven Dispensations’ Morning Watch, IV. 134.9f September (1831) cited in Patterson, op.cit., p138.

the first, Noah I shall be very brief... The first account after his call we have of faithful Abraham which as a minuter circumstance I also pass briefly over... But to take up the point of the dispensation - obedience under the law by which life was to be: this obedience they undertook; and Moses returned to receive the various orderings of divine appointment as under it, and the two tables of testimony. But this dispensation which met the failure of the world ... The ordinance or dispensation of priesthood failed in like manner ... The kingly dispensation failed in the same way as did the nation under the previous ordering which made way for the king ... till the provocation's of Manasseh set aside all hope of recovery or way of mercy in that dispensation. The same is true of universal rule transferred to the Gentiles ... The rejection of our blessed Lord proved that no present mercy or grace, no present interference of God in goodness here would meet the wilful and persevering enmity of the human heart, but only showed it in its true light. But this never being set up as a dispensation but only the manifestation of His Person (by faith), I pass by. The last we have to notice, in a humbled sense of sin in us, is the present, where we are apt to take our ease in the world ... the dispensation of the Spirit. Much has been said, with strong objection to it, as to the apostasy or failure of this dispensation. The results are but too plain ... The attempt to set this dispensation on another footing, as to its continuance, than those dispensations which have failed already, not only shows ignorance of the principles of God's dealings ... And the close of all dispensation, and the end of all question and title of authority shall come, and all be finished, God shall be all in all without question and without failure... In fact the Gentile dispensation, as a distinct thing, took its rise at the death of Stephen, the witness that the Jews resisted the Holy Ghost: as their fathers did, so did they'.⁶²⁹

It may be suggested that Darby was not attempting to devise a specific scheme of dispensations but rather, as his title implies, merely showing how all attempts by mankind to find acceptance with God had failed. It was only later in the writings of Scofield that seven dispensations became fixed within dispensational thinking, long after any association with Irving was ignored or forgotten.⁶³⁰ Ryrie's interpretation of Darby's dispensations is actually significantly at variance with Darby's own writings but more consistent with Scofield and closer in fact to that of the Morning Watch. It is an understatement therefore when Ryrie claims Darby's scheme is, 'not always easily discerned from his writings'.⁶³¹ It is suggested that Ryrie has read back

⁶²⁹ Darby, op.cit., pp124-130 (emphasis added).

⁶³⁰ See chapter 2, fn 182 for Scofield's acknowledgement of Irving's influence.

⁶³¹ Ryrie, Dispensationalism, p68.

into Darby's mind, a scheme that suited his own purposes. From Darby's own pen we may attempt to reconstruct his dispensational chronology and compare it with Ryrie's interpretation, together with Scofield's later 1909 version, itself at variance with the further revision made by Schuyler English in 1967.

The Morning Watch ⁶³²	Darby's Dispensations ⁶³³	Ryrie's Version of Darby ⁶³⁴	Scofield's Dispensations ⁶³⁵
1. Adam		1. Paraisaical state	1. Innocency (Gen. 1:28)
2. Noah	1. Noah (Government)	2. Noah	2. Conscience (Gen. 3:23)
3. Patriarchs		3. Abraham	3. Human Government (Gen. 8:20)
4. Jewish	2. Moses (Law) 3. Aaron (Priesthood) 4. Kingly (Manasseh)	4. Israel- under law under priesthood under kings	4. Promise (Gen. 12:1) 5. Law (Exod. 19:8)
5. Gentiles	5. Spirit (Gentile)	5. Gentiles	6. Grace (John 1:17)
6. Millennium		6. Spirit	
7. Resurrection		7. Millennium	7. Kingdom (Eph. 1:10)

Figure 2. A Comparison of the dispensational schemes of the Morning Watch, John Nelson Darby, Charles Ryrie and Cyrus Scofield

Nevertheless, Darby defended his dispensational hermeneutic on two grounds: 'The covenant is a word common in the language of a large class of Christian professors ... but in its development and detail, as to its unfolded

⁶³² Patterson, op.cit.

⁶³³ Darby, *Apostasy*, pp124-130.

⁶³⁴ Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, pp68, 71.

⁶³⁵ C. I. Scofield, 'Introduction,' *The Scofield Reference Bible* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1909), p5.

principles, much obscurity appears to me to have arisen from a want of simple attention to scripture.⁶³⁶ He went on to claim:

‘For my part, if I were bound to receive all that has been said by the Millenarians, I would reject the whole system, but their views and statements weigh with me not one feather. But this does not hinder me from enquiring by the teaching of the same spirit ... what God has with infinite graciousness revealed to me concerning His dealing with the Church.’⁶³⁷

‘... because it was in this the Lord was pleased, without man's teaching, first to open my eyes on this subject, that I might learn His will concerning it throughout.’⁶³⁸

Darby therefore justified his own dispensational scheme on the basis that others had not studied the scriptures correctly and his interpretation was right because the Lord had revealed it to him personally.

1.2 Scofield's Contribution to a Dispensational Literal Hermeneutic

Scofield's own dispensational scheme draws heavily on Darby's writings.⁶³⁹

Nevertheless, he claims Dispensationalism recovers for the Bible, ‘a clear and coherent harmony of the predictive portions’:

‘The Dispensations are distinguished, exhibiting the majestic, progressive order of the divine dealings of God with humanity, the “increasing purpose” which runs through and links together the ages, from the beginning of the life of man to the end in eternity. Augustine said: “Distinguish the ages, and the scriptures harmonize.”’⁶⁴⁰

Whether Augustine understood ‘ages’ in terms of Scofield's dispensations is questionable. Nevertheless, Scofield claimed his scheme was natural and self evident:

⁶³⁶ J. N. Darby, ‘The Covenants’ The Collected Writings of John Nelson Darby, edited by William Kelly (Kingston on Thames, Stow Hill Bible and Trust Depot, 1962). Doctrine I, III, p68.

⁶³⁷ J. N. Darby, ‘Reflections Upon the Prophetic Inquiry, and the Views Advanced in It,’ Collected, op.cit., Prophetic I, II. pp6-7.

⁶³⁸ J. N. Darby, ‘Evidence from Scripture for the passing away of the present dispensations’ Collected, op.cit., Prophetic I, II. p108.

⁶³⁹ ‘The parallel between Scofield's notes and Darby's works only too clearly reveals that Scofield was not only a student of Darby's works, but that he copiously borrowed ideas, words and phrases.’ Clarence B. Bass, Backgrounds to Dispensationalism, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1960), p18. See also Loraine Boettner, The Millennium, (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1958), p369f.

⁶⁴⁰ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., piii.

‘... there is a beautiful system in this gradualness of unfolding. The past is seen to fall into periods, marked off by distinct limits, and distinguishable period from period by something peculiar to each. Thus it comes to be understood that there is a doctrine of Ages or Dispensations in the Bible.’⁶⁴¹

A comparison between these ‘distinct limits’ as they appear in the Scofield Reference Bible and subsequent revisions, where they have moved and been renamed, would suggest that they are not as clear as Scofield claimed.

Scofield Reference Bible (1917) ⁶⁴²	The New Scofield Study Bible (1984) ⁶⁴³
1. Innocency (Gen. 1:28)	1. Innocence (Gen. 1:28)
2. Conscience (Gen. 3:23)	2. Conscience or Moral Responsibility (Gen. 3:7)
3. Human Government (Gen. 8:20)	3. Human Government (Gen. 8:15)
4. Promise (Gen. 12:1)	4. Promise (Gen. 12:1)
5. Law (Ex. 19:8)	5. Law (Ex. 19:1)
6. Grace (John 1:17)	6. Church (Acts 2:1)
7. Kingdom or Fulness of Times (Eph. 1:10) ⁶⁴⁴	7. Kingdom (Rev. 20:4)

Figure 3: A comparison of the dispensations in the Scofield Reference Bible and the New Scofield Study Bible

Scofield’s rigid adherence to these dispensations also required him to make some unusual assertions to ensure consistency. So for example, in describing the transition between his fourth dispensation of promise and his fifth dispensation of law, Scofield argued that all that Abraham’s descendants needed to do was ‘abide in their own land to inherit every blessing.’ He goes on to claim, ‘The Dispensation of Promise ended when Israel rashly accepted the law (Ex. 19:8). Grace had prepared a deliverer (Moses), provided a sacrifice for the guilty and by divine power brought them out of bondage (Ex.19:4); but at Sinai they exchanged grace for law.’⁶⁴⁵ In doing so, Scofield reduces the giving of the Law by Moses from being God’s gracious initiative to the ‘rashness’ of the Jewish people.

⁶⁴¹ C. I. Scofield, *Addresses on Prophecy*, (New York, Chas. C. Cook, 1914), p13.

⁶⁴² Scofield, *Scofield*, op.cit., fn. 4, p5.

⁶⁴³ *The New Scofield Study Bible*, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1984), p3.

⁶⁴⁴ Scofield, *Scofield*, op.cit., fn. 3, p1250.

⁶⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, fn. 1, p20.

Similarly, in his introduction to the gospels, Scofield artificially imposes stark divisions before and after Calvary which lead him to the surprising assertion that, 'The mission of Jesus was, primarily, to the Jews ... The Sermon on the Mount is law, not grace ... the doctrines of grace are to be sought in the Epistles not in the Gospels.'⁶⁴⁶ Surprisingly, Scofield ignores the one division that is self-evident between the old and new covenants. Mark 1:1 categorically states, 'The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ', while Matthew 11:13 further informs us, 'For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John'. However, Scofield places the life and ministry of Jesus within the dispensation of Law along with John the Baptist and the Old Testament prophets, arguing that the sixth dispensation of grace only 'begins with the death and resurrection of Christ.'⁶⁴⁷ So, for example, the Lord's Prayer, and in particular the petition, 'Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors' (Matthew 6:12) is, according to Scofield, not applicable to the church, since it is 'legal ground'.⁶⁴⁸ This is because Scofield believed the gospels were essentially for the Jews and therefore not relevant for the church. So, in the note attached to Ephesians 3 he states, 'In his (Paul's) writings alone we find the doctrine, position, walk, and destiny of the church.'⁶⁴⁹ Scofield seems to have imposed divisions that do not exist in scripture and ignored those that do.

Scofield was the first to formalise the methodology of literalism promoted within early Dispensationalism in his book, Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth,⁶⁵⁰ published in 1888. Scofield based his thesis on the Authorised Version rendering of 2 Timothy 2:15 in which Paul instructed Timothy to, 'rightly divide the word of truth.' Scofield explains:

'The Word of Truth, then, has right divisions, and it must be evident that, as one cannot be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" without observing them, so any study of that Word which ignores these divisions must be in large measure profitless and confusing. The

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid., p989.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid., fn. 2, p1115.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 1002. Many other dispensationalists take the same view. See Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology, (Dallas, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1975), volume 4, p221.

⁶⁴⁹ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit, p1252.

⁶⁵⁰ C. I. Scofield, Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth, (Philadelphia, Philadelphia School of the Bible, 1928).

purpose of this pamphlet is to indicate the more important divisions of the Word of Truth.⁶⁵¹

Ironically, the foundation of Scofield's hermeneutic appears to be based on an over-literalised misreading of the verse. The United Bible Societies' textual commentary, which is the standard work used by translators worldwide, clarifies the meaning of the verse: "Rightly handling" translates a Greek verb that occurs only here in the New Testament. Literally it refers to the act of cutting something in a straight way; figuratively it refers to expounding something rightly, or teaching something correctly. Here, what needs to be handled correctly is the word of truth.⁶⁵² Scofield took the verb literally to say that the Bible must be cut up into divisions. Most commentators, however, recognise that Paul was using the term figuratively to mean, 'correctly handle' the Bible.

The first chapter of Scofield's book, entitled 'The Jew, the Gentile and the Church of God' sets the tone for all future dispensational teaching in which Israel is distinguished from the Church. It is also based on an over-literal interpretation of another verse, 1 Corinthians 10:32, where Paul urges Christians to 'Give no offence, neither to the Jews, nor the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God.' On the basis of this verse Scofield divided the world into three classes of people, Jews, Gentiles and the Church, an idea which is now the 'warp and woof of dispensational teaching.'⁶⁵³ Others suggest, however, that the verse is actually delineating two groups of people, Christians and

⁶⁵¹ Scofield, op. cit., p3.

⁶⁵² An alternative translation for this verse is: 'You must try as hard as you can to cause God to fully approve of you as a worker who is not ashamed of his work and correctly teaches the true message.' USB New Testament Handbook, (New York, United Bible Societies 1997), based on the following: William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, revised and augmented by F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 1979); Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains, 2 volumes (New York, United Bible Societies, 1988); C. K. Barrett, The Pastoral Epistles in the New English Bible. (New York, The New Clarendon Press, 1963); Arland J. Hultgren, I-II Timothy, Titus Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament, (Minneapolis, Augsburg Publishing House, 1984); Walter Lock, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles, International Critical Commentary, (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1924).

⁶⁵³ Joseph M. Canfield, The Incredible Scofield and His Book, (Vallecito, Ross House Books, 1988), p166.

non-Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles.⁶⁵⁴ Nevertheless, beginning with these passages, Scofield insisted that promises made to the Jews in the Old Testament were not fulfilled in the New Testament Church but continue to apply to Israel. So, for example, he insists that, 'Not one instance exists of a 'spiritual' or figurative fulfilment of prophecy ... Jerusalem is always Jerusalem, Israel is always Israel, Zion is always Zion ... Prophecies may never be spiritualised, but are always literal.'⁶⁵⁵ Scofield's literalism extended to exact verbal phraseology. This led him to claim, for example, that there are seven dispensations, eight covenants, and eleven great mysteries.⁶⁵⁶

In his Introduction, Scofield explained that over the previous fifty years there had been an 'unprecedented' degree of interest in Bible study 'free from merely controversial motive'. He claimed that from this 'new and vast exegetical and expository' body of literature, which was 'inaccessible for bulk, cost, and time to the average reader,' Scofield had taken the 'winnowed and attested results' of this study and these were now 'embodied in the notes, summaries, and definitions of this edition.' Scofield insisted that 'expository novelties, and merely personal views and interpretations, have been rejected.'⁶⁵⁷ He distinguished his own from previous Bible reference systems, which he regarded as 'unscientific and often misleading.' Instead, Scofield insisted that in his new system:

'... all the greater truths of the divine revelation are so traced through the entire Bible, from the place of first mention to the last, that the reader may himself follow the gradual unfolding of these, by many inspired writers through many ages, to their culmination in Jesus Christ and the New Testament scriptures. This method imparts to Bible study an interest and vital reality which are wholly lacking in fragmented and disconnected study.'⁶⁵⁸

The footnotes which appear in the Scofield Reference Bible are actually rather selective, appearing on less than half the pages of the Bible.⁶⁵⁹

⁶⁵⁴ 'In the present verse it simply means "not causing (moral or spiritual) damage to anyone else."' USB, op.cit.

⁶⁵⁵ C.I. Scofield, Scofield Bible Correspondence Course, (Chicago, Moody Bible Institute, n.d.), pp45-46.

⁶⁵⁶ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., Index.

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid., Introduction, piii.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid., piii.

⁶⁵⁹ Footnotes appear on only 327 out of a total of 970 pages of the Old Testament, and on only 214 out of 352 pages in the New Testament.

Scofield goes much further than other Bible commentators such as Albert Barnes or Matthew Henry in also providing comprehensive headings embedded within the biblical text. These not only include chapter and paragraph titles but, in many cases, verse by verse headings in chapters deemed significant to dispensationalists that would otherwise prove obscure without such 'helps'. For example, in Isaiah 11 under the heading 'The Davidic kingdom set up' in the space of ten verses additional headings guide readers carefully through the chapter to ensure a dispensational reading:

'(1) The King's ancestry (11:1); (2) The source of the King's power, the sevenfold Spirit (11:2); (3) The character of his reign (11:3-5); (4) The quality of the kingdom (11:6-8); (5) The extent of the Kingdom (11:9); (6) How the kingdom will be set up (11:10-16).'⁶⁶⁰

Had Scofield's notes been published as a commentary separately, they would have eventually, in all probability, been forgotten or superseded. The difference, however, according to one of Scofield's biographers, is that 'neither Henry nor Barnes had the temerity, guile or gall to get their notes accepted as scripture itself.'⁶⁶¹ Within a few years of publication the Scofield Reference Bible, published by Oxford University Press, did indeed come to achieve confessional status for the notes which appeared alongside the biblical text. Charles G. Trumball, editor of the Sunday School Times, described Scofield's Bible as nothing less than a 'God-planned, God-guided, God-energized work.'⁶⁶² Scofield's Reference Bible has, however, undergone significant revision since it was first published in 1909. Scofield completed the first revision in 1917, apparently with the help of seven consulting editors, several of whom were D.L. Moody's colleagues.⁶⁶³ Further revisions continued to adapt, modify and elaborate Scofield's dispensational package. The New Scofield Reference Bible was published in 1967, edited by Dr E. Schuyler English. In 1984 a further revision based on the New International Version of the Bible was undertaken by three of the faculty from Philadelphia

⁶⁶⁰ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., p723.

⁶⁶¹ Canfield, op.cit., p209.

⁶⁶² William E. Cox, An Examination of Dispensationalism, (Philadelphia, Presbyterian & Reformed, 1974), p55-56.

⁶⁶³ James M. Gray, President of Moody Bible Institute and William J. Erdman.

College of Bible: Clarence Mason, Sherrill Babb and Paul Karleen, and published by the Oxford University Press as The New Scofield Study Bible.⁶⁶⁴

Dallas Theological Seminary, founded by one of Scofield's students, Lewis Sperry Chafer in 1924, has probably accomplished more for the cause of Dispensationalism and Christian Zionism than any other institution in the world. Through its faculty and students, for nearly eighty years Dallas has contributed to a proliferation of dispensational thinking, from the Classical Dispensationalism of Cyrus Scofield and Lewis Chafer to the Revised Dispensationalism of Charles Ryrie⁶⁶⁵ and John Walvoord⁶⁶⁶; the Apocalyptic Dispensationalism of Hal Lindsey⁶⁶⁷ and Tim LaHaye;⁶⁶⁸ the Messianic

⁶⁶⁴ E. Schuyler English, The New Scofield Study Bible, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1984).

⁶⁶⁵ Charles C. Ryrie, Dispensationalism Today, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1965).

⁶⁶⁶ John Walvoord, Israel in Prophecy, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1962); The Nations in Prophecy, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1967); The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1975); The Rapture Question, rev. edn. (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1979); The Nations, Israel and the Church in Prophecy, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1988); Armageddon, Oil and the Middle East Crisis (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1990); Major Bible Prophecies, (New York, Harper Collins, 1991).

⁶⁶⁷ Hal Lindsey, The Late Great Planet Earth, (London, Lakeland, 1970); Satan is Alive and Well on Planet Earth, (London, Lakeland, 1973); There's A New World Coming, A Prophetic Odyssey, (Santa Ana, California, Vision House, 1973); The Liberation of Planet Earth, (London, Lakeland, 1974); The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon, (New York, Bantam, 1981); The Promise, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1982); The Rapture: Truth or Consequences, (New York, Bantam, 1983); The Terminal Generation, (New York, Bantam, 1983); A Prophetic Walk Through the Holy Land, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1983); Israel and the Last Days, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1983); Combat Faith, (1986); The Road to Holocaust, (New York, Bantam, 1989); Planet Earth-2000 AD, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1994); The Final Battle, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1995); Planet Earth-2000 AD, revised edition (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1996); Amazing Grace, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1996); Blood Moon, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1996); The Apocalypse Code, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1997); Planet Earth: The Final Chapter, (Beverly Hills, California, Western Front, 1998); Where is America in Prophecy? video (Murrieta, California, Hal Lindsey Ministries, 2001); International Intelligence Briefing, (Palos Verdes, California, Hal Lindsey Ministries), monthly journal.

⁶⁶⁸ Tim LaHaye & Jerry B. Jenkins, Are We Living in the End Times? (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1999); Rapture Under Attack, (Wheaton, Tyndale House); Left Behind, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1995); Tribulation Force, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1996); Nicolae, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1997); Soul Harvest, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1998); Apollyon, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1999); Assassins, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1999); The Indwelling, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2000); The Mark, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2001); Desecration, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2002); The Remnant, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2002).

Dispensationalism of Moishe Rosen⁶⁶⁹ and Arnold Fruchtenbaum;⁶⁷⁰ and the Progressive Dispensationalism of Craig Blaising and Darrel Bock.⁶⁷¹

Blaising and Bock represent a new generation of younger dispensationalists among the faculty of Dallas Theological Seminary who have attempted to redefine their movement and engaged in constructive dialogue with covenantal theologians on the relationship of the Church to Israel.⁶⁷² They distance themselves from what they regard as the 'naïveté' of the founder's vision,⁶⁷³ distinguishing the traditional Dispensationalism of Lewis Sperry Chafer and Charles Ryrie⁶⁷⁴ from 'Scofieldism',⁶⁷⁵ as well as from the popular apocalypticism of 'Lindseyism'.⁶⁷⁶ They regard themselves as less land centred and less future centred.⁶⁷⁷

Ryrie is sceptical, unwilling to concede to such revisionism. He prefers to describe the position of Blaising and Bock as 'neo-dispensationalist' or 'covenant dispensationalist', for holding to what he terms a 'slippery' hermeneutic.⁶⁷⁸ Ryrie similarly insists on distinguishing what he defines as Normative Dispensationalism from 'Ultradispensationalism'. The latter is rooted in the teaching of Ethelbert W. Bullinger (1837-1913) and his successor Charles H. Welch, who, according to Ryrie, have merely carried Dispensationalism to its 'logical extremes.' Ultradispensationalists believe for

⁶⁶⁹ Moishe Rosen, *Jews for Jesus* (Old Tappan, New Jersey, Revell, 1974); *Y'shua* (Chicago, Moody Press, 1982); *Overture to Armageddon? Beyond the Gulf War* (San Bernardino, California, Here's Life Publishers, 1991).

⁶⁷⁰ Arnold Fruchtenbaum, *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology* (Tustin, Ariel Ministries, 1992).

⁶⁷¹ Craig A. Blaising & Darrell L. Bock, ed. *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1992); *Progressive Dispensationalism*, (Wheaton, Victor, 1993); Robert L. Saucy, *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism*, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1993).

⁶⁷² Clarence E. Bass, *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism*, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1960); Daniel P. Fuller, *Gospel and Law, Contrast or Continuum? The Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology*, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1980); Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock eds., *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1992); David E. Holwerda, *Jesus and Israel, One Covenant or Two?*, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1995).

⁶⁷³ Blaising & Bock, *Dispensationalism*, op.cit., p19.

⁶⁷⁴ Charles C. Ryrie, *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith*, (Neptune, New Jersey, Loizeaux Brothers, 1953); *Dispensationalism Today*, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1965); *Dispensationalism*, (Moody Press, Chicago, 1995).

⁶⁷⁵ Blaising & Bock, *Dispensationalism*, op.cit., pp21-23.

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid., pp14-15.

⁶⁷⁷ Darrell Bock, cited in 'For the Love of Zion', *Christianity Today*, 9 March (1992), p50.

⁶⁷⁸ Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, op.cit., pp171, 175, 178.

instance, that the Church did not begin at Pentecost but in Acts 28 when Israel was set aside; the Great Commission of Matthew and Mark is Jewish and therefore not for the Church; the Gospels and Acts describe the Dispensation of the Law; only the Pauline prison epistles, that is Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, relate to the Church Age; water baptism is not for the Church Age; and Israel, not the Church, is the Bride of Christ.⁶⁷⁹ Their teachings are perpetuated today by the Berean Bible Society, Berean Expositor, Berean Publishing Trust⁶⁸⁰ and Grace Mission. Despite these attempts to redefine and reshape the Dispensationalism of Darby and Scofield, many remain unconvinced.⁶⁸¹ As an outsider, James Barr insists in all its variations, 'Dispensationalism is a totally fundamentalist scheme.'⁶⁸² Following Scofield's literalistic hermeneutic and rigid distinction between Israel and the church, most contemporary dispensationalists regard the founding of the State of Israel as evidence of divine intervention, that the Jews remain God's 'chosen people' and have a divine right to the Middle East in perpetuity.

1.3 Developments in Literalist Hermeneutics

In 1936, Chafer defined Scofieldian literalism in the following terms: 'The outstanding characteristic of the dispensationalist is ... that he believes every statement of the Bible and gives to it the plain, natural meaning its words imply.'⁶⁸³ Like Chafer, Charles Ryrie suggests that it is only dispensationalists who are consistent in applying a literal interpretation: 'To be sure, literal/historical/grammatical interpretation is not the sole possession or practice of dispensationalists, but the consistent use of it in all areas of biblical interpretation is.'⁶⁸⁴ In its classical form, Ryrie insists the *sine qua non* of Dispensationalism to be:

1. A dispensationalist keeps Israel and the Church distinct...

⁶⁷⁹ Ibid., p199.

⁶⁸⁰ Charles Welch and Stuart Allen, Perfection or Perdition, An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, (London, The Berean Publishing Trust, 1973).

⁶⁸¹ John H. Gerstner, Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth, (Brentwood, Tennessee, Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1991).

⁶⁸² James Barr, Fundamentalism, (London, SCM, 1977), p197.

⁶⁸³ L. S. Chafer, 'Dispensationalism,' Bibliotheca Sacra, 93, October (1936), pp410, 417.

⁶⁸⁴ Ryrie, Dispensationalism, op.cit., p40.

2. This distinction between Israel and the church is born out of a system of hermeneutics that is usually called literal interpretation...
3. A third aspect... concerns the underlying purpose of God in the world... namely, the glory of God... To the normative dispensationalist, the soteriological, or saving, program of God is not the only program but one of the means God is using in the total program of glorifying Himself.⁶⁸⁵

He goes on to claim that,

'Dispensationalism is a result of consistent application of the basic hermeneutical principle of literal, normal, or plain interpretation. No other system of theology can claim this ... The nonliteralist is the nondispensationalist, and the consistent literalist is a dispensationalist.'⁶⁸⁶

Chafer included nondispensational premillennialists within his category of inconsistency because, he claimed, they 'spiritualised' prophetic references to Israel. Louis Goldberg went further, claiming that it is those who reject a literalist hermeneutic who are imposing their own theological framework on the scriptures:

'... two established rules of interpretation are as follows: 1) "When scripture makes common sense use no other sense;" 2) "Prophecy ... must be interpreted literally ... The reason a non-literal method of interpretation is adopted is, almost without exception, because of a desire to avoid the obvious interpretation of the passage. The desire to bring the teaching of scripture into harmony with some predetermined system of doctrine instead of bringing doctrine into harmony with the scriptures has kept this practice alive." The point is that we have to let the prophetic scriptures speak on their own without reading into them!'⁶⁸⁷

Chafer similarly taught that without a dispensational distinction between Israel and the Church, a simple literal reading of the Bible would lead to confusion and internal inconsistency.⁶⁸⁸ Dwight Pentecost, also of Dallas Theological Seminary, similarly insists, 'scripture is unintelligible until one can distinguish clearly between God's program for his earthly people Israel and that for the

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid., pp39-40.

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid., p92.

⁶⁸⁷ Louis Goldberg, 'Whose Land Is It?' *Issues*, 4.2. Goldberg quotes from Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come*, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1964), p60.

⁶⁸⁸ L. S. Chafer, 'Dispensationalism,' *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 93, October (1936) pp446-447. Quoted in Daniel P. Fuller, *Gospel and Law, Contrast or Continuum? The Hermeneutic of Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1980), pp24-25.

Church.⁶⁸⁹ The premise that the Bible is unintelligible without the dispensational distinction between Israel and the Church can only be sustained if one excludes *a priori*, all other methods of interpretation.

Patrick Goodenough of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ) explains the consequence of this literalist approach: 'We simply believe the Bible. And that Bible, which we understand has not been revoked, makes it quite clear that God has given this land as an eternal inheritance to the Jewish people.'⁶⁹⁰ Anne Dexter also challenges those who reject this hermeneutic: 'Some Arab believers and expatriate Christians in Israel feel so strongly about these matters that they will not read the parts of the Bible that seem to promise the land to the Jews or in any way uphold their election ... Large parts of the scriptures are effectively invalidated by this approach.'⁶⁹¹

In the 1980s the Churches Ministry Among Jewish People (CMJ)⁶⁹² went further, locating the origin of what they term a 'spiritualised' reading of the Bible in the heresy of Marcion who proposed the abandonment of the Old Testament: 'But that was unacceptable to the Church and a better way to de-Judaize the Hebrew scriptures was to "Christianise" the Hebrew scriptures so as to spiritualise the text and read New Testament concepts into the text. That view is still prevalent today.'⁶⁹³ Hal Lindsey has also attributed the development of erroneous views concerning Israel to an allegorical, non-literal hermeneutic allegedly advocated by Origen.⁶⁹⁴

Others, however, have argued that it was the consistent approach of the Post-Apostolic Fathers, including Origen, to interpret the Hebrew

⁶⁸⁹ Dwight Pentecost, Things to Come, (Findlay, Ohio, Dunham, 1958), p529.

⁶⁹⁰ Kathy Kern, 'Blessing Israel? Christian Embassy Responds' Christian Peacemakers Team, menno.org.cpt.news@MennoLink.org (2 November 1997).

⁶⁹¹ Anne Dexter, View the Land, (South Plainfield, New Jersey, Bridge Publishing, 1986), pp214-215.

⁶⁹² In response to changing social and political attitudes toward Jews, the London Jews' Society has modified its name several times, first to 'Church Missions to Jews' in the early 20th Century; to 'The Church's Mission to the Jews'; then, 'The Church's Ministry Among the Jews'; and finally in 1995 to 'Church's Ministry Among Jewish People'.

⁶⁹³ CMJ 'Replacement Theology: Is the Church the "Israel of God"? (St Albans, Herts, CMJ, n.d.).

⁶⁹⁴ Lindsey, Road, pp7-8.

scriptures typologically, that is as ‘types’ of New Testament realities,⁶⁹⁵ just as Jesus and the Apostles had done.⁶⁹⁶ Indeed Jesus was often misunderstood by those who took his words too literally. John’s gospel contains several instances. For example, after he had cleansed the Temple and was asked by the Pharisees for a sign, Jesus replied, ‘Destroy this Temple and I will raise it again in three days’ (John 2:19). They thought he meant their Temple. In the next few chapters: Nicodemus wonders how he can enter his mother’s womb again (John 3:4); the Samaritan woman believes Jesus is offering her water on tap (4:15); and the religious leaders fear Jesus is advocating cannibalism by insisting they must eat his body and drink his blood (6:51-52). Ironically, one of the most common mistakes the gospels record, therefore, is the way in which people deduced a literal earthly interpretation when Jesus intended a spiritual application.⁶⁹⁷ Because of their commitment to literalism, however, Lindsey and other dispensationalists make the same mistake and do not distinguish between the figurative or typological approaches used by the Reformers and the allegorical methods of interpretation found typically in pre-Reformation Roman Catholicism.⁶⁹⁸ The distinction between these two methods of interpretation is significant since the former places particular emphasis on the historical context of passages as well as upon the way scripture interprets scripture,⁶⁹⁹ whereas an allegorical approach finds eternal truths without reference to historical setting. A typological approach also

⁶⁹⁵ For example the Temple and its sacrifices are seen as types or illustrations of Jesus. See Hebrews 9 and Matthew 26:61 ‘Destroy this Temple and I will rebuild it again in three days.’

⁶⁹⁶ Jaroslav Pelikan, The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600), volume 1 (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1971); Clement, ‘First Epistle.’ Ante-Nicene Fathers, edited by A. Cleveland Coxe (Peabody, Massachusetts, Henrickson, 1994), 1. pp12-13; Epistle of Barnabas IV. Ante-Nicene Fathers, edited by A. Cleveland Coxe (Peabody, Massachusetts, Henrickson, 1994), 1. p138; Justin, Dialogue with Trypho, XI. Ante-Nicene Fathers, edited by A. Cleveland Coxe (Peabody, Massachusetts, Henrickson, 1994), 1. pp200-267; Irenaeus, Against Heresies. IV. XXI. 3. Ante-Nicene Fathers, edited by A. Cleveland Coxe (Peabody, Massachusetts, Henrickson, 1994), 1. p493.

⁶⁹⁷ T.L. Frazier, A Second Look at the Second Coming, (Ben Lomond, California, Conciliar Press, 1999), p78.

⁶⁹⁸ J. N. D. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrine, revised edition (San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1978), pp69-75.

⁶⁹⁹ John Goldingay, Approaches to Old Testament Interpretation, (Leicester, IVP, 1981), pp97-114; Richard Longenecker, Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1975); John Wenham, Christ and the Bible, (Guildford, Eagle, 1993).

highlights the way New Testament writers see Jesus Christ to be the fulfilment of most Old Testament images and types.⁷⁰⁰ There is evidence that a typological interpretation of the Old Testament was consistently followed by the Church from the 1st Century, and did not arise with Marcion as CMJ claim or with Origen as Lindsey alleges.⁷⁰¹ On the contrary, it has been argued that it is the dispensational distinction between Church and Israel that is without historical precedent.⁷⁰² Some have observed that it only came to prominence in post-holocaust theology.⁷⁰³

1.4 A Literal Futurist Hermeneutic Examined

As has been noted, Hal Lindsey is probably the most influential Christian Zionist writer today with book sales in excess of 40 million published in over 50 languages.⁷⁰⁴ This appraisal will therefore use Lindsey's writings as illustrative of how other Christian Zionist writers apply a 'literal' hermeneutic.

1.4.1 Changing Literalism

One of the most noticeable aspects of a literal futurist hermeneutic is the way some adherents have adapted their interpretations to fit with changing events.⁷⁰⁵ For example, in There's a New World Coming (1973), Lindsey was relatively circumspect as to the meaning of the symbols used in the Book of Revelation. He speculated that John would have been lost for words trying to

⁷⁰⁰ E. A. Martens, Plot and Purpose in the Old Testament, (Leicester, IVP, 1981); Graeme Goldsworthy, Gospel and Kingdom, A Christian Interpretation of the Old Testament, (Exeter, Paternoster, 1981); According to Plan, The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible, (Leicester, IVP, 1991).

⁷⁰¹ DeMar and Leithart, op.cit., p37.

⁷⁰² George Eldon Ladd, The Blessed Hope, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1956), pp35-60, 130-136; Robert Doyle, Eschatology and the Shape of Christian Belief, (Carlisle, Paternoster, 1999), pp242-250; Cornelius P. Venema, The Promise of the Future, (Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 2000), pp205-218; Iain Murray, The Puritan Hope, (Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 1971), pp187-206.

⁷⁰³ David, E. Holwerda, Jesus and Israel, One Covenant or Two?, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1995), pp1-26.

⁷⁰⁴ Lindsey's latest publisher, Western Front, is more conservative referring to 'a dozen books with combined world sales of more than 35 million.' Lindsey, The Final Battle, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1995), p. xiii & back cover.

⁷⁰⁵ Compare Grant Jeffrey, Armageddon, Appointment with Destiny, (Toronto, Frontier Research Publications, 1988), pp182-187; with Messiah, War in the Middle East & Road to Armageddon, (Toronto, Frontier Research Publications, 1991), p268. In the former Jeffrey dates Daniel's 70th week to the 7 years 1993-2000 and the Lord's return and

describe modern weapons, 'In the case just mentioned, the locusts might symbolize an advanced kind of helicopter.'⁷⁰⁶ By the time he wrote Apocalypse Code (1997), 24 years later, however, as new and more destructive military hardware was manufactured, Lindsey became more specific and confident of his interpretation. So, for example, 'might symbolize' now became what John 'actually saw':

'Just exactly how could a first Century prophet describe, much less understand, the incredible advances in science and technology that exist at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries? Yet he testified and God bore witness that he actually saw and heard things like: supersonic jet aircraft with missiles ... advanced attack helicopters ... intercontinental ballistic missiles with Multiple Independently Targeted Re-entry Vehicles tipped with thermonuclear warheads ... biological and chemical weapons, aircraft carriers, missile cruisers, nuclear submarines, laser weapons, space stations and satellites.'⁷⁰⁷

Such literalism is problematic when futurists attempt to keep pace with the dramatic geo-political changes as seen in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the last two decades. Lindsey had insisted in 1981 and again in 1994 that his, by then, apparently contradictory assessments of Russia were, nevertheless, both predicted in the Bible.

1980's Countdown to Armageddon	Planet Earth 2000 AD
'Today, the Soviets are without question the strongest power on the face of the earth. Let's look at recent history to see how the Russians rose to the might predicted for them thousands of years ago.' ⁷⁰⁸	'We see Russia as no longer a world threat, but a regional power with a world-class military - exactly what Ezekiel 38 and 39 predicted it would be.' ⁷⁰⁹

Figure 4: An illustration of the changing significance of Russia in Lindsey's Eschatology

With the gradual demise of Russia as a world power and the disintegration of the Communist bloc, Lindsey began to switch his emphasis from Russian

cleansing of a rebuilt Temple to the 24th of the 9th month in 2000 AD In the latter book Jeffrey appears to contradict himself claiming, 'We cannot and must not set dates', p276.

⁷⁰⁶ Lindsey, There's, op.cit., p8. See also p141 for a reference to Cobra helicopters.

⁷⁰⁷ Lindsey, Apocalypse, op.cit., p36.

⁷⁰⁸ Lindsey, 1980's, op.cit., p68.

⁷⁰⁹ Lindsey, Planet, p216.

Communism in 1970 to Islam Fundamentalism by 1994.⁷¹⁰ In The Late Great Planet Earth (1970) the threat comes from 'The Russian force'.⁷¹¹ By 1997 this had become, 'The Russian-Muslim force'.⁷¹² In keeping pace with the changing Middle East scene, by 1999 Lindsey was claiming this axis of evil was now led by a 'Muslim-Russian alliance'.⁷¹³

Lindsey's difficulty with finding an accurate and lasting interpretation is nowhere more evident than in his attempts to date the Second Advent. In Matthew 24:34, Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.' In 1970 Lindsey raised the question, 'what generation?' Logically, he suggested, it would be the generation that had seen the signs Jesus had described, but added, 'chief among them the rebirth of Israel'. He then suggested a biblical generation was around 40 years: 'If this is a correct deduction, then within forty years or so of 1948, all these things could take place. Many scholars who have studied Bible prophecy all their lives believe that this is so.'⁷¹⁴ Lindsey was not the only writer to suggest that the Messiah would return in 1988.⁷¹⁵ When Jesus did not return that year, however, Lindsey revised his timescale by suggesting that a biblical generation could be anything from 40 to 100 years and that perhaps Daniel's prophetic clock had only started ticking again in 1967 when Israel captured Jerusalem rather than in 1948.⁷¹⁶ Undaunted, in 1988 Grant Jeffrey calculated that Daniel's last 'week' would begin in 1993, the Tribulation would occur in 1997 and the cleansing of the Temple and Millennium would begin in the Autumn of 2000.⁷¹⁷ Like Lindsey, his subsequent books, written after 1993, avoided being so specific.⁷¹⁸

⁷¹⁰ Lindsey, Chapter 1 of The Final Battle, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1995), is entitled 'The New Islamic Global Threat', p1.

⁷¹¹ Lindsey, Late, op.cit., p160.

⁷¹² Lindsey, Apocalypse, op.cit., p153.

⁷¹³ Lindsey, Briefing, op.cit., 7th January (1999).

⁷¹⁴ Lindsey, Late, op.cit., p54.

⁷¹⁵ Another classic example was Edgar Whisenant, who predicted the return of Christ some time between 11-13 September 1988 in his book, 88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988, (Nashville, World Bible Society, 1988), pp3, 36, 56. The book sold 2 million copies.

⁷¹⁶ Hal Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p6.

⁷¹⁷ Jeffrey, Armageddon, op.cit., pp171-195.

1.4.2 Symbolic Literalism

Although Christian Zionists insist scripture must be interpreted literally, they have not always been consistent themselves. Indeed even Scofield conceded 'It is then permitted - while holding firmly the historical verity - reverently to spiritualize the historical scriptures.'⁷¹⁹ David Brickner's hermeneutic illustrates this tension. In his interpretation of Daniel 9:24-27 he first of all requires a figurative interpretation of the term 'week'.⁷²⁰ 'He is not speaking of literal weeks but of periods of time, each a period of seven years.'⁷²¹ However, in order to give a futurist reading to Daniel's prophecy and apply it to today, it is also necessary for dispensationalists to place a 'parenthesis' of 2000 years between the 69th and 70th week when the prophetic clock was inexplicably stopped in mid-verse. Daniel 9:26 reads, 'After the sixty-two 'sevens' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.' Brickner claims that the prophecy has not been completely fulfilled. The first half of the verse was fulfilled in 70 AD but apparently one 'seven' of the seventy still remains in Brickner's words, 'to be played out'. He argues, 'But there seems to be a break in Daniel's countdown; he indicates a time lapse between the sixty-ninth seven and the final seven ... the past 2000 years have been a parenthesis in Daniel's prophecy and we await that final seven.'

⁷¹⁸ Jeffrey, Messiah, op.cit., pp137-154.

⁷¹⁹ C.I. Scofield, Scofield Bible Correspondence Course, (Chicago, Moody Bible Institute, 1907), pp45-46.

⁷²⁰ This obscure passage so popular with dispensational futurists reads, 'Seventy "sevens" are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy. Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven "sevens," and sixty-two "sevens." It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. After the sixty-two "sevens," the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. He will confirm a covenant with many for one "seven." In the middle of the "seven" he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing {of the Temple} he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.' (Daniel 9:24-27).

⁷²¹ Brickner, Future, op.cit., p17.

Kenneth Barker, the editor of the NIV Study Bible,⁷²² offers several reasons for the apparent gap of 2000 years in Daniel's prophecy. His two strongest arguments are based on literalist presuppositions which crumble if they themselves are questioned. He suggests that firstly, the seventieth 'week' could not have been fulfilled because the results of the Messiah's work outlined in verse 24 have not yet been fully realised. Secondly, the remaining unfulfilled prophecies would be unintelligible unless the 'present church age is regarded as a distinct period of time of unknown duration in God's prophetic program.'⁷²³ The problem with this interpretation is that it assumes there must be a gap because a literal interpretation becomes 'unintelligible' without one. The arbitrary decision to stop the prophetic clock and place a 2000 year gap between Daniel's 69th and 70th week is probably the most eccentric example of a non-literal and unnatural interpretation imposed on the text by those who insist on a literal hermeneutic.⁷²⁴ Other commentators such as John Goldingay regard attempts to date Daniel's 'weeks' literally as flawed because they try and read this prophecy as a literal chronology instead of what he terms 'chronography'. He argues that Daniel is using, 'a stylized scheme of history used to interpret historical data rather than arising from them.' It is, he claims, 'comparable to cosmology, arithmology, and genealogy.'⁷²⁵

Lindsey takes a similar approach to the apocalyptic descriptions in the book of Revelation, suggesting that a first Century person would be unable to comprehend scientific developments some 2000 years later. Lindsey claims John 'had to illustrate them with phenomena of the first century; for instance, a thermonuclear war looked to him like a giant volcanic eruption spewing fire and brimstone.' Lindsey claims the symbolism found in Revelation was the result of 'a first-Century man being catapulted in God's time machine up to the end of the twentieth century', then returning and describing what he saw

⁷²² The most popular Study Bible today, which is not dispensational.

⁷²³ Kenneth Barker, 'Premillennialism in the Book of Daniel' The Master's Seminary Journal 4.1 Spring (1993), p36.

⁷²⁴ Gary DeMar, Last Days Madness, (Atlanta, American Vision, 1997), p81.

⁷²⁵ John E. Goldingay, Daniel, Word Biblical Commentary, (Milton Keynes, Word, 1991) p.257. For a fuller critique see Edward J. Young, The Prophecy of Daniel, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1949), pp201-221, and Joyce G. Baldwin, Daniel, An Introduction and Commentary, (Leicester, IVP, 1978), pp172-178.

in ways familiar to his own generation.⁷²⁶ Capitalising on the Bible Code phenomena, Lindsey described his own as the Apocalypse Code.⁷²⁷ Using this 'key' enables Lindsey to claim that John's 'locusts' are helicopters; 'horses prepared for battle' are actually heavily armed attack helicopters; 'crowns of gold' are the helmets worn by pilots; and the 'sound of their wings' is the 'thunderous sound of many attack helicopters flying overhead';⁷²⁸ the 'bow' wielded by the Antichrist in Revelation 6:1-2, is actually 'a code for long range weapons like ICBM's'.⁷²⁹ Lindsey even claims that the reference to the 'colour of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone' in Revelation 9:17 refers to the 'Chinese national flag ... emblazoned on the military vehicles'.⁷³⁰ Extending the use of this code to the rest of the Bible, Lindsey claims that while references to 'Israel' always mean Israel, other nations mentioned in prophecy require translation. So, following Darby and Scofield, Lindsey equates ancient tribes and nations mentioned in Old Testament prophecies with contemporary enemies of Israel in the Middle East.⁷³¹ 'In Psalm 83, some 3,000 years ago, God gave a warning of what would happen in the last days ... In these verses the Philistia or Philistines are the modern Palestinians. Tyre is modern Lebanon. Assyria is modern Syria.'⁷³² It is not always clear, following Lindsey, on what basis a literal interpretation may become a figurative interpretation, other than that it appears to fit a contemporary application more clearly and reinforces a predetermined eschatology.

1.4.3 Contradictory Literalism

While dispensationalists claim to use a consistent plain literal interpretation of scripture, at times they nevertheless reach very different, and sometimes contradictory, conclusions. For example, in their interpretation of Revelation 9:13-19, M.R. DeHann and Hal Lindsey contradict one another:

⁷²⁶ Lindsey, Israel, op.cit., pp32-33. This chapter is reused heavily in Apocalypse Code, op.cit., pp30-44.

⁷²⁷ Lindsey, Apocalypse, op.cit.,

⁷²⁸ Ibid., p42.

⁷²⁹ Ibid., p72.

⁷³⁰ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p247.

⁷³¹ J. N. Darby, 'The Hopes,' Collected, op.cit., Prophetic I, II, p380; C. I. Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., fn. 1, p883.

⁷³² Lindsey, Final, op.cit., p2.

M.R. DeHann (1946)	Hal Lindsey (1973)
'In Revelation 9:13-21 we have a description of an army of two hundred million horsemen ... seems to be a supernatural army of horrible beings, probably demons, who are permitted to plague the unrepentant sinners on the earth.' ⁷³³	'The four angels of Revelation 9:14-15 will mobilize an army of 200 million soldiers from east of the Euphrates ... I believe these 200 million troops are Red Chinese soldiers accompanied by other Eastern allies.' ⁷³⁴

Figure 5: An example of the contradiction between the literal interpretation of Revelation 9 by DeHaan and Lindsey

For DeHann and also LaHaye, the 200 million are 'a supernatural horde of 200 million demonic horsemen'⁷³⁵ while for Lindsey and Schuyler English they are literally Chinese soldiers.⁷³⁶ Lindsey does, however, suggest their 'horses' are symbolic for mobilized ballistic missile launchers.⁷³⁷ Each claims his is a 'literal' interpretation of the text. William Hendrikson raises several questions about this form of hermeneutics in his own commentary on the book of Revelation:

'Do these symbols refer to specific events, single happenings, dates or persons in history? For if they do, then we may well admit that we cannot interpret them. Because among the thousands of dates and events and persons in history that show certain traits of resemblance to the symbol in question, who is able to select the one and only date, event or person that was forecast by this particular symbol? Confusion results. We get thousands of "interpretations" but no certainty. And the Apocalypse remains a closed book.'⁷³⁸

Indeed some have described this form of literalism as a licence for 'full-scale exegetical exploitation.'⁷³⁹ Tim LaHaye's ten volume Left Behind series, for example, which provides a fictional account of the Rapture and Tribulation,

⁷³³ M. R. DeHann, Revelation, 35 Simple Studies in the Major Themes of Revelation, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1946), p148.

⁷³⁴ Lindsey, There's, op.cit., pp142-143.

⁷³⁵ Tim LaHaye & Jerry B. Jenkins, Are We Living in the End Times?, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1999), pp190-192.

⁷³⁶ Schuyler English, New, op.cit., p1334.

⁷³⁷ Lindsey, There's, op.cit., p143.

⁷³⁸ William Hendrikson, More than Conquerors, (London, Inter-Varsity, 1962). p40-41.

⁷³⁹ Frank Kermode, 'Can we say absolutely anything we like?' Art, Politics, and Will: Essays in Honour of Lionel Trilling, edited by Quentin Anderson (New York, Basic, 1977), pp159-72, cited in Kathleen C. Boone, The Bible Tells Them So (London, SCM, 1989), p44.

have proved very lucrative financially for both the authors and publishers, selling in excess of 32 million copies since 1995.⁷⁴⁰

1.4.4 Enhanced Literalism

To assist readers in their understanding of otherwise obscure passages of scripture, Lindsey and others add words which, although absent in the original biblical text, nevertheless enhance or amplify the interpretation being made.

In The Road to Holocaust where Lindsey takes the promises made in Romans 11 and applies them to the contemporary State of Israel and not simply to Jews generally, he adds the word 'national' to the reference to Israel in the text.⁷⁴¹ Similarly, in a quotation of Matthew 24:15-18, Lindsey assists readers to see that this prophecy refers to some future date which requires the rebuilding of the Temple, rather than to 70 AD when the Zealots and Romans both desecrated Herod's Temple.⁷⁴² 'Therefore when you see the Abomination which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place [of the rebuilt Temple] (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.'⁷⁴³ Lindsey's interpretation of Daniel

⁷⁴⁰ Tim LaHaye & Jerry B. Jenkins, Left Behind, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1995); Tribulation Force, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1996); Nicolae, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1997); Soul Harvest, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1998); Apollyon, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1999); Assassins, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1999); The Indwelling, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2000); The Mark, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2001); Desecration, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2002); The Remnant, (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2002); Nancy Gibbs, 'Apocalypse Now', Time, 1 July 2002, pp41-53. Tim LaHaye has authored a further 40 books with combined sales of 30 million and published in 33 languages.

⁷⁴¹ Lindsey, Road, op.cit., p176.

⁷⁴² While Lindsey and Walvoord believe Jesus is predicting a future desecration of a rebuilt Temple, non-dispensationalist commentators suggest his words were fulfilled in the events leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD when Jewish Zealots desecrated the Temple using it as a fortress against the Romans. See William Hendriksen, The Gospel of Matthew, (Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 1973), p858; Michael Green, The Message of Matthew, (Leicester, IVP, 2000), pp249-258. Eusebius the 4th Century Bishop and historian, for example, refers to the eyewitness accounts of Josephus, the 1st Century Jewish historian, to show how these predictions had by then already been fulfilled. Eusebius, 'On the Predictions of Christ' Eusebius, The Ecclesiastical History and the Martyrs of Palestine, (London, SPCK, 1927), 3:7, 73-74.

⁷⁴³ Lindsey, Apocalypse, op.cit., p78. Moishe Rosen similarly adds the names of contemporary nations to Zechariah's prophecy concerning the end to the Babylonian captivity to help readers to appreciate that it refers to the restoration which began in the late 19th Century. 'First, the regathering of the Jewish people will take place from the west (represented by Egypt) and from the east (represented by Assyria). Rosen, Overture, op.cit., p152.

11:40-45 is similarly imaginative, claiming this depicts 'the Russian-led Islamic invasion of Israel.'

'At the time of the end the King of the South [the Muslim Confederacy] will engage him [the False Prophet of Israel] in battle, and the King of the North [Russia] will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He [the Russian Commander] will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. He will also invade the Beautiful Land [Israel]. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon [Jordan] will be delivered from his hand.'⁷⁴⁴

Lindsey touches here upon one of the most important prophecies within dispensational eschatology. The claim is that 'Gog', also described as the 'Prince of Rosh', and 'Magog', mentioned in Ezekiel 38:15-16 are enigmatic references to Russia. While John Cumming was suggesting this theory in 1864,⁷⁴⁵ it only really gained popular recognition as a result of its inclusion within the notes of the Scofield Reference Bible. Scofield is probably relying on Gaebelein when he asserts:

'That the primary reference is to the northern (European) powers, headed up by Russia, all agree ... "Gog" is the prince, "Magog" his land. The reference to Meshech and Tubal (Moscow and Tobolsk) is a clear mark of identification. Russia and the northern powers have been the latest persecutors of dispersed Israel, and it is congruous both with divine justice and with the covenants ... that destruction should fall at the climax of the last mad attempt to exterminate the remnant of Israel in Jerusalem.'⁷⁴⁶

Lindsey and other futurists have simply perpetuated the principle begun by Scofield, however unintentionally, of adding the word Russia to the text to enhance this interpretation. 'And you (Russia) will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you.'⁷⁴⁷ The suggestion that 'Gog' and 'Magog' refer to Russia, or that in Scofield's words,

⁷⁴⁴ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., pp182-183.

⁷⁴⁵ John Cumming, Destiny of Nations, (London, Hurst and Blackette, 1864). Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg replied, 'the poor Russians have been here very unjustly arraigned among the enemies of God's people. Rosh, as the name of a people, does not occur in all the Old Testament.' The Prophecies of the Prophet Ezekiel, translated by A.C. Murphy and J.G. Murphy (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1869), p333.

⁷⁴⁶ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., p883

⁷⁴⁷ Lindsey, 1980's, op.cit., p65.

‘all agree,’ is often repeated by other dispensational writers.⁷⁴⁸ Tim LaHaye for example, insists, ‘Etymologically, the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel 38 and 39 can only mean modern-day Russia.’⁷⁴⁹ Nevertheless, this interpretation has been totally discredited by biblical scholars and etymologists alike.⁷⁵⁰ Further evidence against this futurist interpretation is suggested by Gary DeMar who observes that there is no mention of Gog and Magog in the Book of Revelation, chapters 4-19, which dispensationalists claim describes the period of the Tribulation when Russia is supposed to attack Israel.⁷⁵¹

1.4.5 Arbitrary Literalism

Some advocates of literalism appear rather arbitrary in the way that they apply passages to contemporary events, peoples or places without necessarily any corroboration or consistency. By circular reasoning it is assumed that since passages must refer to this generation, contemporary terms or nations may be substituted. So Lindsey can claim, ‘The God of Israel has sworn in the prophecies that He will not forsake the Israelis, nor let them be destroyed.’⁷⁵²

‘I know from my study of the Bible that the final great war includes Turkey as part of the Islamic grouping allied with Russia ... The great nations that do get biblical reference are the Kings of the East, (China, India, Pakistan - all openly nuclear), Russia (Gog and Magog), Libya, Egypt, Iran, Iraq and so on.’⁷⁵³

⁷⁴⁸ Jeffrey, Armageddon, op.cit., pp98ff. Unlike later dispensationalists such as Scofield, Walvoord and Lindsey, however, Irving believed the reference to ‘Gog’ in Ezekiel 38 to be, ‘a confederacy of all the nations of the East, which are left from the destruction of the Roman apostasy, which proceedeth this great congregation of nations against Jerusalem spoken of in all the prophets.’ Irving, Last, op.cit., p25.

⁷⁴⁹ LaHaye and Jenkins, Are, op.cit., p86.

⁷⁵⁰ Edwin Yamauchi, Foes from the Northern Frontier, (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1982), pp19-27; Ralph H. Alexander, Ezekiel, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1986), p930; Hengstenberg, op.cit., p333.

⁷⁵¹ Gary DeMar, op. cit., pp346-352. He notes that the reference to Gog and Magog in Revelation 20:8 occurs after the Millennium. He also notes that ‘north’ in biblical orientation actually referred to the nations of the east which would attack Jerusalem from the north. He also raises the question that if Rosh does refer to Russia, why do not other nations mentioned in biblical prophecy sound like their modern counterparts? John Walvoord alleges that the reference to Gog and Magog in Revelation 20 means that Russia will make its appearance at the end of the Millennium in yet another battle. John Walvoord, Major Bible Prophecies, (New York, Harper Collins, 1991), p480.

⁷⁵² Lindsey, 1980’s, op.cit., p45.

⁷⁵³ Lindsey, Final, op.cit., pp183, 213.

Without any substantiation Lindsey claims that the Bible foretold many other recent events including the rise of Muslim Fundamentalism, the collapse of the Middle East peace process and the development of the European Community.⁷⁵⁴ Similar conclusions are made by others.⁷⁵⁵ For example, David Brickner claims, 'we know that Persia is Iran',⁷⁵⁶ and that the destruction of Babylon mentioned in Revelation 18 is 'modern day Iraq'.⁷⁵⁷ Surprisingly, Scofield rejected the notion that a 'literal Babylon is to be built on the site of ancient Babylon',⁷⁵⁸ identifying Babylon symbolically with Rome. Charles Dyer has nevertheless popularised a more consistent literal interpretation in which Babylon is indeed Babylon. Dyer, a faculty member of Dallas Theological Seminary, traces the rise of Saddam Hussein in scripture and concludes that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was depicted in Isaiah 13 as an attempt to set up a powerbase to attack Israel. However, when Isaiah says, 'the day of the Lord is near', Dyer and other futurists have to reinterpret this. The word 'near' cannot literally mean 'soon' as it was said over 2,500 years ago so must therefore refer to the 'end times'. Dyer also sees Saddam Hussein as a successor to Nebuchadnezzar (the only Arab leader ever to defeat Israel), because of his hostility to Israel and his intention to rebuild Babylon.⁷⁵⁹ Irrespective of Hussein's motives, mimicking the past is hardly the equivalent of fulfilling prophecy.⁷⁶⁰

Probably most surprising of all, however, is the claim made by several dispensational authors that the United States is mentioned in the Bible.⁷⁶¹ Lindsey appears to have been the first to make this assertion, based on

⁷⁵⁴ Hal Lindsey, International Intelligence Briefing, 7th January (1999). Lindsey also claims a 'gigantic fault' runs through the Mount of Olives. Late, op.cit., p174.

⁷⁵⁵ Charles Dyer, The Rise of Babylon, (Wheaton, Illinois, Tyndale House, 1991), p198; Grant Jeffrey, Armageddon, Appointment with Destiny, (Toronto, Frontier Research, 1988), pp185-187.

⁷⁵⁶ Brickner, Future, op.cit., p70.

⁷⁵⁷ Ibid., p73.

⁷⁵⁸ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., fn.1. p1347.

⁷⁵⁹ Dyer, op.cit. Following his literalist interpretation, references to Babylon in the Book of Revelation must logically refer to Babylon, that is, modern day Iraq.

⁷⁶⁰ Gary DeMar, op.cit., p342.

⁷⁶¹ Noah Hutchings, U.S. in Prophecy, (Oklahoma City, Hearthstone Publishing, 2000); Arno Froese, Terror in America, Understanding the Tragedy, (West Columbia, Olive Press, 2001); Mark Hitchcock, Is America in Prophecy? (Portland, Oregon, Multnomah, 2002); Hal Lindsey, Where is America in Prophecy? video (Murrieta, California, Hal Lindsey Ministries, 2001).

Revelation 12:14-17.⁷⁶² 'The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert.' Lindsey suggests that this describes 'some massive airlift' that will transport escaping Jewish believers from the holocaust of Armageddon to the safety of places like Petra. He claims that, 'Since the eagle is the national symbol of the United States, it's possible that the airlift will be made available by aircraft from the US Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean.'⁷⁶³ Lindsey does not explain why the symbolism of the eagle should necessarily be applied to the United States instead of to any one of a number of countries like Germany or the Czech Republic who also have an eagle as part of their national emblem. Nor does he explain why this particular reference to an eagle should be understood as describing modern aircraft and not other passages such as Exodus 19:4, Deuteronomy 32:11-12 or Isaiah 40:31 which also refer to eagles. Such speculative interpretations hardly corroborate Lindsey's claim to hold to a consistent literal hermeneutic.

However, following Scofield's rigid dispensations, Lindsey has also concluded that Christians are not obligated to keep the Ten Commandments because they were only given to the nation of Israel in a previous dispensation. He alleges that the early Church made a mistake when it tried to impose the Law on Gentile believers. 'Israel's failure under the Law serves as an historical lesson to all of us today that religion of all kinds blinds us to the truth.'⁷⁶⁴ It is ironic that Lindsey should charge his critics with anti-Semitism when he arbitrarily nullifies the laws which would, if applied, give protection against such racism.

1.5 The Bible: A Literal Futurist Hermeneutic Assessed

It has been shown that the development of a literal and futurist reading of scripture and, in particular, the argument that Old Testament references to Israel apply to contemporary Jews and the State of Israel, rather than the Church, is directly attributable to Lewis Way, Edward Irving, John Darby and their associates who attended the Albury and Powerscourt conferences of the

⁷⁶² Hal Lindsey, There's a New World Coming, A Prophetic Odyssey, (Santa Ana, California, Vision House, 1973).

⁷⁶³ Ibid., p185.

1820s and 1830s. These were given particular expression in Darby's dispensational scheme and then codified and accorded virtually canonical status in the Scofield Reference Bible. Sandeen observes that Dispensationalism has, 'a frozen biblical text in which every word was supported by the same weight of divine authority.'⁷⁶⁵ Clarence Bass goes further, insisting that 'No part of historic Christian doctrine supports this radical distinction between church and kingdom. To be sure they are not identical; but Dispensationalism has added the idea that the kingdom was to be a restoration of Israel, not a consummation of the church.'⁷⁶⁶

From Hal Lindsey's writings in particular, it has been demonstrated that in practice literalism is not necessarily any more consistent or free of bias than any other system of hermeneutics: it is actually flexible enough to be adapted to suit changing events; can contradict other literal interpretations; is often assisted as much by eisegesis as exegesis; and can lead to dogmatic and unsubstantiated claims concerning the contemporary fulfilment of biblical prophecy.

As early as 1871, Charles Hodge, the Princeton theologian understood the logical consequences of dispensational literalism. From his perspective,

'The argument from the ancient prophecies is proved to be invalid, because it would prove too much. If those prophecies foretell a literal restoration, they foretell that the temple is to be rebuilt, the priesthood restored, sacrifices again offered, and that the whole Mosaic ritual is to be observed in all its detail.'⁷⁶⁷

As will be shown, this is precisely what many contemporary messianic and apocalyptic dispensationalists believe is foretold in scripture.

Covenantalists like Hodge however, argue that the Old Covenant should be interpreted in the light of the New Covenant, not the other way round. In Colossians, for example, Paul actually uses a typological hermeneutic to explain this: 'Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration

⁷⁶⁴ Lindsey, Road, op.cit., pp153-154.

⁷⁶⁵ Ernest R. Sandeen, 'Toward a Historical Interpretation of the Origins of Fundamentalism,' Church History 36 (1967), 70, cited in Gerstner, Wrongly, op.cit., p100.

⁷⁶⁶ Bass, op.cit., p31.

⁷⁶⁷ Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology, 3 volumes (London, James Clarke, [1871] 1960), 3, p808.

or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ' (Colossians 2:16-17). The question is therefore not whether the promises of the covenant are to be understood literally or spiritually.⁷⁶⁸ It is instead a question of whether they should be understood in terms of Old Covenant shadow or New Covenant reality. The failure to recognise this principal is the basic hermeneutical error which Christian Zionists make and from which flow the other distinctive doctrines that characterise the movement.

2. Chosen Peoples: The Relationship Between Israel and the Church

Christian Zionists believe that the Jews remain God's 'chosen people' enjoying a unique relationship, status and eternal purposes within their own land, separate from any promises made to the Church. Edward Irving was one of the first to suggest this. Based on Lacunza's futurist interpretation, Irving predicted: 'When the Lord shall have finished the taking of witness against the Gentiles ... He will begin to prepare another ark of testimony ... and to that end will turn his Holy Spirit unto his ancient people, the Jews, and bring them unto those days of refreshing ... This outpouring of the Spirit is known in scripture as "the latter rain."⁷⁶⁹ The belief that God has two chosen people has led some to suggest that they are accepted on the basis of separate covenants; that the status of Israel is superior to the Church; that the role of Israel supercedes that of the Church; and that as a consequence, the purpose of the Church is to 'Bless Israel'.

2.1 Two Chosen Peoples: Israel and the Church

Darby developed Irving's ideas and taught not only that national Israel would succeed the Church but that God has two separate but parallel means of working in eternity, one through the Church, the other through Israel.⁷⁷⁰ 'Thus there is, and always will remain,' he argued, 'a distinction between Israel, the Gentiles and the Church.'⁷⁷¹ This distinction is borne out of Darby's rigid

⁷⁶⁸ R.T. Kendall, 'How literally do you read your Bible?' Israel and Christians Today, Summer (2001), p9.

⁷⁶⁹ Irving, Preliminary, op.cit., pp5-6.

⁷⁷⁰ Ryrie, Dispensationalism, op.cit., p48.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid., p137.

system of dispensations and led him to believe that there could be no future earthly hope for the Church since its dispensation was ending, and that the Church was simply a 'parenthesis' soon to be replaced on earth by a revived and restored national Israel.⁷⁷² 'The Church has sought to settle itself here, but it has no place on the earth ... [Though] making a most constructive parenthesis, it forms no part of the regular order of God's earthly plans, but is merely an interruption of them to give a fuller character and meaning to them (the Jews).'⁷⁷³ It appears that Darby's depiction of the Church as a 'parenthesis' may also have been taken from the pages of the Morning Watch. In June 1831 an article suggested, 'The Christian dispensation is so sparingly mentioned in the prophets, that many have considered it as a kind of parenthesis in their discourse.'⁷⁷⁴

Darby was not the first to insist on a radical distinction between Israel and the Church either. In the 4th Century Marcion had stressed a radical discontinuity between Judaism and Christianity 'and even between the God of the OT and the Father of Jesus.'⁷⁷⁵ It was, however, Darby who first insisted that 'The Jewish nation is never to enter the Church.'⁷⁷⁶

Scofield elaborated on Darby's distinction between Israel and the Church claiming, 'in origin, calling, promise, worship, principles of conduct and future destiny, all is contrast.'⁷⁷⁷ Historic Christianity has traditionally seen some measure of continuity between the Old and New Covenants, and in the relationship between Israel and the Church. Scofield, however, in his 'Introduction to the Four Gospels' insists:

'In approaching the study of the gospels, the mind should be freed, so far as possible, from mere theological concepts and presuppositions. Especially is it necessary to exclude the notion - a legacy in Protestant thought from post-apostolic and Roman Catholic theology - that the

⁷⁷² J. N. Darby, 'The Apostasy of Successive Dispensations', Collected, op.cit., Eccl. I, I, p197.

⁷⁷³ J. N. Darby, 'The Character of Office in The Present Dispensation', Collected, op.cit., Eccl. I, I, p94.

⁷⁷⁴ Morning Watch, III, June (1831), p253.9f cited in Patterson, op.cit., p144. Patterson is open minded as to whether Albury invented the concept, reshaped it or received it from elsewhere.

⁷⁷⁵ W. Ward Gasque, 'Marcion', The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, edited by J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1978), p620.

⁷⁷⁶ J. N. Darby, The Hope of the Church of God, (London: G. Morrish, n.d.), p106.

⁷⁷⁷ C. I. Scofield, Scofield Bible Correspondence Course, 19th edition (Chicago, Moody Bible Institute), p23.

Church is the true Israel, and that the Old Testament foreview of the kingdom is fulfilled in the Church.⁷⁷⁸

So, in commenting on Matthew 16:18, where Jesus promises to 'build my church,' Scofield suggests that, 'Israel was the true "church" but not in any sense the N.T. church-the only point of similarity being that both were "called out" and by the same God. All else is contrast.'⁷⁷⁹ Again, on Acts 7:38, Scofield explains away the term used by Stephen of Israel as 'the church in the wilderness.' He argues, 'Israel in the land is never called a church. In the wilderness Israel was a true church (Gr. ekklesia = called-out assembly), but in striking contrast with the N.T. ekklesia (Mt.16:18).'⁷⁸⁰

Scofield claimed to demonstrate, as Darby had done, that the Church age will ultimately end in failure and apostasy, to be replaced by a revived national Israel who will enjoy the blessings of the final kingdom dispensation.⁷⁸¹ Based on his literalist hermeneutic, Scofield highlighted the different terms used in scripture for Israel and the Church, distinguishing between Israel as the 'earthly wife' of God while the Church is the 'heavenly bride' of Christ.

'The N.T. speaks of the Church as a virgin espoused to one husband (2 Cor. 11.1, 2); which could never be said of an adulterous wife, restored in grace. Israel is, then, to be the restored and forgiven wife of Jehovah, the Church the virgin wife of the Lamb (John 3.29; Rev. 19.6-8); Israel Jehovah's earthly wife (Hos. 2.23); the Church the Lamb's heavenly bride (Rev. 19.7).'⁷⁸²

This led Scofield, following Darby, to insist that Israel's inheritance will be on earth whereas the destiny of the Church lies in heaven. Lewis Sperry Chafer draws out the implications of Scofield's dichotomy between Israel and the church:

'The dispensationalist believes that throughout the ages God is pursuing two distinct purposes: one related to the earth with earthly people and earthly objectives involved which is Judaism; while the

⁷⁷⁸ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., p989.

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid., fn. 2. p1021.

⁷⁸⁰ Ibid., fn. 1, p1158.

⁷⁸¹ William E. Cox, Why I Left Scofieldism, (Phillipsberg, New Jersey, Presbyterian and Reformed, n.d.) p8.

⁷⁸² Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., fn. 1, p922.

other is related to heaven with heavenly people and heavenly objectives involved, which is Christianity.⁷⁸³

For Chafer, 'Israel is an eternal nation, heir to an eternal land, with an eternal kingdom, on which David rules from an eternal throne'⁷⁸⁴ so that in eternity, 'never the twain, Israel and church, shall meet.'⁷⁸⁵ Following Scofield and Chafer, Ryrie claims the 'basic premise of Dispensationalism is two purposes of God expressed in the formation of two peoples who maintain their distinction throughout eternity.'⁷⁸⁶ Ryrie justifies this on the basis that, 'When the Church was introduced God did not abrogate His promises to Israel nor enmesh them into the Church.'⁷⁸⁷ He argues that such a distinction is 'built on an inductive study of the two words, not a scheme superimposed on the Bible.'⁷⁸⁸ Critics argue that the historical analysis of the rise of Dispensationalism would suggest the exact opposite. Nevertheless, various authors have attempted to find in the Bible analogies that justify this perpetual distinction between Israel and the Church. John Hagee, pastor and founder of the 17,000 member Cornerstone Church in San Antonio, Texas, for example, offers an exposition of Genesis 22:17 to illustrate how God has 'two Israels, one physical and one spiritual.' The verse reads 'I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore.' Departing from a literal hermeneutic, Hagee suggests that since God mentions two separate and distinct elements, the stars in the sky and the sand of the seashore, he is referring in dispensational terms to the heavenly Church and the earthly Israel:

'Stars are heavenly, not earthly. They represent the church, spiritual Israel. The 'sand of the shore' on the other hand, is earthly and represents an earthly kingdom with a literal Jerusalem as the capital city. Both stars and sand exist at the same time, and neither ever replaces the other. Just so, the nation of Israel and spiritual Israel, the church, exist at the same time and do not replace each other.'⁷⁸⁹

⁷⁸³ Lewis Sperry Chafer, Dispensationalism, (Dallas, Seminary Press, 1936), p107.

⁷⁸⁴ Chafer, Systematic Theology, (Dallas, Dallas Seminary Press, 1975), 4. pp315-323, cited in Gerstner, Wrongly, op.cit., p184.

⁷⁸⁵ Gerstner, Wrongly, op.cit., p185.

⁷⁸⁶ Ryrie, Dispensationalism, op.cit., pp44-45.

⁷⁸⁷ Ibid., pp97-98.

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid., pp97-98.

⁷⁸⁹ John Hagee, Final Dawn over Jerusalem, (Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 1998), pp108-109.

Hagee's exposition is undermined somewhat by the fact that by around 430 BC Nehemiah looked back and thanked God that the promise made to Abraham had already been fulfilled, 'You made their sons as numerous as the stars in the sky' (Nehemiah 9:23). It may be assumed that Nehemiah had Jewish sons in mind not Gentiles. Jews for Jesus also affirm the distinction between Israel and the Church somewhat more tactfully, 'We believe that Israel exists as a covenant people through whom God continues to accomplish His purposes and that the Church is an elect people in accordance with the New Covenant, comprising both Jews and Gentiles who acknowledge Jesus as Messiah and Redeemer.'⁷⁹⁰ The deduction nevertheless is that God has two 'chosen peoples', 'two Israels' or two 'covenant people' called out of the world in different dispensations. This also implies that they were chosen on the basis of different criteria as well. The question raised by this literalist hermeneutic is therefore not simply whether God has one or two 'chosen people' but also whether there is one covenant or two.⁷⁹¹

2.2 Two Covenants: Law, Grace and Blessing Israel

Covenant premillennialists, as well as progressive dispensationalists, while accepting that God has two 'chosen people', argue for only one covenant through faith in Jesus Christ. However, classical, hyper and political dispensationalists, as well as some others,⁷⁹² advocate two covenants and by implication, two ways to salvation. Scofield, for example, suggests salvation by works, when he contrasts the dispensation of the law with the dispensation of grace:

'As a dispensation, grace begins with the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom. 3. 24-26; 4. 24, 25). The point of testing is no longer legal obedience as the condition of salvation, but acceptance or rejection of Christ ... The predicted end of the testing of man under grace is the apostasy of the professing church.'⁷⁹³

⁷⁹⁰ Jews for Jesus, 'Our Doctrinal Statement', <http://www.jews-for-jesus.org>

⁷⁹¹ David E. Holwerda, Jesus and Israel, One Covenant or Two?, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1995).

⁷⁹² Margaret Brearley, 'Jerusalem in Judaism and for Christian Zionists' in, Jerusalem, Past and Present in the Purposes of God, edited by P.W.L. Walker (Croydon, Deo Gloria Trust, 1992), pp99-124.

⁷⁹³ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., p1115. This footnote is substantially modified in the New Scofield Study Bible, to stress that salvation is always through faith. p1094.

For Scofield, 'legal obedience' was a 'condition of salvation'. Lindsey follows Scofield's position, speculating that had the Jewish people accepted Jesus as their Messiah, the rest of the world would not have been offered the gospel. 'The gospel and the age of grace would not have come to us Gentiles unless Israel had fallen into unbelief.'⁷⁹⁴ John Hagee put it rather more dramatically, 'if the Jewish people had accepted the suffering Messiah, every Gentile would have been forever lost.'⁷⁹⁵ Hagee, Prince and Lindsey claim that because Israel has a covenant with God, their national redemption will be achieved when Jesus returns and they recognise him as their Messiah. Lindsey explains, 'He redeemed the Church (both Jew and Gentile who trusted in Him) at the Cross. That is an accomplished fact. Israel's national redemption in accordance with the Abrahamic covenant takes place at the Second Advent.'⁷⁹⁶ The ICEJ shares this viewpoint, distinguishing between 'the former and latter rains' and between the Church and 'His Jewish sons and daughters.'⁷⁹⁷ They also claim to have 'received a very clear mandate to be extremely cautious' in proclaiming 'God's Word to Zion' which is why they forbid their staff to witness to Jews.⁷⁹⁸ When asked by a reporter from the Jerusalem Post whether the ICEJ was actually a 'covert' missionary organisation in Israel, the director Jan Willem van der Hoeven replied emphatically, 'Not so. The Zionist Christians are different. Our objectives are not as you describe. We don't believe in conversion, we don't want to make the Jews into Christians.' He explained that 'The Jewish religion must modify itself in the course of time - but on one point only, the identity of the Messiah ... they must make the modification as a collective entity.' As fellow dispensationalists affirm, this will occur after the Messiah returns. For this reason 'Suborning individuals to secede would serve no purpose.'⁷⁹⁹

⁷⁹⁴ Lindsey, Road, op.cit., p208.

⁷⁹⁵ Hagee, Final, op.cit., p98.

⁷⁹⁶ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p98.

⁷⁹⁷ Patrick Goodenough, 'Jerusalem journalist hits back for Zionists', Church of England Newspaper, 4 May (1997).

⁷⁹⁸ Prepare ye The Way of the Lord, (Jerusalem, ICEJ, n.d.)

⁷⁹⁹ Cited in John S. Ross, 'Beyond Zionism: Evangelical Responsibility Towards Israel' Mishkan, 1 (1990) 12, p17.

The ICEJ therefore understand their 'biblical responsibility toward the Jewish people'⁸⁰⁰ in terms of bringing 'comfort' to Israel. They base this conviction on Isaiah 40, 'Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for' (Isaiah 40:1-2). ICEJ interpret this passage as mandating political and practical support for Jews, encouraging them to make aliyah and settle the land God promised to Abraham, including the Occupied Territories. According to Isaiah 40:2 'comfort' is brought to Israel by explaining how her sins have been atoned for. In 40:9 it is achieved by proclaiming the good news to Zion, 'Here is your God'. A reductionist and materialistic interpretation of this important passage obscures the ultimate comfort for both Jew and Gentile which is revealed in the Messiah.⁸⁰¹ Similarly, ICEJ narrows and Zionises Matthew 25:40 where Jesus explains that on the day of judgement the King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' ICEJ interprets this as their mandate for providing material support to the State of Israel:

'In the same sense that the first apostles were commissioned by the Lord to be his witnesses from Jerusalem to the uttermost parts of the earth, we also feel compelled to proclaim the word of Israel's restoration, and the Christian's response to it, to every country and in every place where there are believers.'⁸⁰²

The equation of the 'restoration' ministry of the ICEJ with that of the apostolic commission to preach the gospel to the whole world is simply without precedent.

Derek Prince, like the ICEJ, invests terms such as 'message' and 'proclaim' with new meaning, redefining the Christian message to one of 'Blessing Israel':

'Our obligation is to do everything scripture requires of us to help the Jewish people regain the fulness of their God-appointed inheritance, both natural and spiritual. Our message ... is this: "He who scattered Israel will gather them" ... Today, the regathering of Israel is a banner

⁸⁰⁰ International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, (Jerusalem, ICEJ, 1993), p10.

⁸⁰¹ Ross, op.cit., p19.

⁸⁰² International, op.cit., p22.

lifted up by God for all nations to see. It is His preordained purpose at this time that all nations be confronted with this message.’⁸⁰³

Margaret Brearley explains the theological basis for disassociating from what she terms ‘missionising’ the Jewish people:

‘Because the Jewish people does in some mysterious way bear God’s name and witness to his existence and ethical demand ... Christianity was clearly not designed to replace Judaism; instead ... there was a continuing covenant with the Jewish people ... Christians need to learn from observant Jews. Orthodox Judaism, therefore, can be a helpful reminder of what should be (and often was) orthodox in Christianity ... The Church, God’s Gentile worshippers, vitally needs God’s Jewish worshippers; for together we are the “household of God”’.⁸⁰⁴

Her argument appears to be the logical deduction of the dispensational distinction between the Church and Israel. However, it is unlikely to be one that Orthodox or indeed Reform Jews share. It is also questionable whether Paul had Judaism in mind when he described the unity Jews and Gentiles shared in ‘God’s household’ in Ephesians 2:19. In the preceding verses Paul explains that this was only achieved through Christ’s death. In the following verse Paul also explains that this household is built on the foundation of the apostles and ‘upon Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone,’ whom the Orthodox Jews had rejected and crucified. John Hagee, however, concurs with a two covenant perspective, suggesting, ‘the idea that the Jews of the world are going to convert and storm the doors of Christian churches is a delusion born of ignorance.’⁸⁰⁵ In an interview he speculated: ‘I believe that every Jewish person who lives in the light of the Torah, which is the word of God, has a relationship with God and will come to redemption ... In fact trying to convert Jews is a waste of time ... Jews already have a covenant with God that has never been replaced by Christianity.’⁸⁰⁶ Dispensationalists like Scofield, Lindsey, Hagee and ICEJ, as well as others such as Brearley, therefore disavow ‘missionising’ Jewish people, in part because they believe the Jewish people have a separate covenant relationship with God which

⁸⁰³ Derek Prince, The Last Word on the Middle East, (Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Derek Prince Ministries, 1982), p112, 117-118.

⁸⁰⁴ Brearley, op. cit., p121.

⁸⁰⁵ Hagee, op.cit., p112.

⁸⁰⁶ ‘San Antonio Fundamentalist battles anti-Semitism.’ Houston Chronicle, April 30, (1988), cited in G. Richard Fisher, ‘The Other Gospel of John Hagee’ Personal Freedom Outreach,

makes belief in Jesus as Saviour unnecessary or at least not essential until after he returns. Conveniently, it also ensures they receive favoured status as Christian representatives within the State of Israel.

Ironically it is messianic believers, while invariably dispensationalist, who are nevertheless among the strongest critics of this position. Organisations such as Christian Witness to Israel, whose origins lie within Covenantal Premillennialism, together with Jews for Jesus, whose leaders are dispensational, argue for the vital necessity of Jewish evangelism. John Ross, the deputy director of Christian Witness to Israel, and a minister of the Free Church of Scotland, has made this assessment of the ICEJ:

‘The ICEJ further contradicts its evangelical claims by forbidding Christians involved in its events from any kind of evangelistic activity. Participants in the annual Christian Celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles organized by the Embassy, are instructed in the printed programmes when visiting Jewish homes: “Please do not leave tracts or attempt to proselytise. This can cause great offence.”⁸⁰⁷

Jews for Jesus have also been highly critical of fellow dispensational organisations such as Bridges for Peace and the ICEJ, for refusing to engage in evangelism.⁸⁰⁸ Brickner argues that the disavowal of evangelism among Jews is an even greater evil than anti-Semitism:

‘Some Christian Zionists are so eager to be for Israel that they seem to care little about Jews being for Jesus. They are so in love with the idea of Jewish people being in the Land that they don't think of the implications of those same people being outside of Christ ... God is no more willing to pass over the sins of disobedient Israel today than He was on that first Passover Eve ... Without the blood of the Lamb on the doorposts of their hearts, modern Israelites are destined for judgement, too. This means that the majority of the people of Israel are in jeopardy. God will judge the unrighteous of the nations and Israel today, just as He did then. There is no automatic pass. Only in Christ is there assurance of lasting safety and peace for the Jewish nation.’⁸⁰⁹

True Christian Zionists are, he says, ‘unrepentant evangelists of the Jewish people. The rest are frauds and phonies ... the blood of Israel will be on their

<http://www.pfo.org/jonhagee.htm>

⁸⁰⁷ Ross, op.cit., p17.

⁸⁰⁸ Louis Goldberg, ‘Historical and Political Factors in the Twentieth Century Affecting the Identity of Israel’ in *Israel The Land and the People*, edited by H. Wayne House, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Kregel, 1998).

⁸⁰⁹ David Brickner, ‘Don’t Pass Over Israel’s Jubilee,’ *Jews for Jesus Newsletter*, April (1998).

hands.’ Although Brickner forcefully repudiates dispensationalists who have dispensed with evangelism, there is a sense in which even he and other messianic dispensationalists nevertheless do still affirm another way to God for Jewish people. According to Brickner, there remains hope for those unbelievers who miss the Rapture but survive Armageddon and are alive when Jesus returns. After the Rapture of the Church, during the millennium all nations, he claims, will come to worship God in Jerusalem.⁸¹⁰

2.3 Israel has a Superior Status to the Church

By regarding the Church as a digression from God’s continuing purposes for Israel, it is hard for dispensationalists not to elevate Israel to a superior status above the Church. Brickner, for example, following Darby’s own dispensational terminology, regards the last two thousand year history of the Church as merely ‘a parenthesis’⁸¹¹ to God’s future plans for the Jews. He recognises that to regard Israel as ‘God’s chosen people, the apple of his eye - his special one’, appears ethnocentric and even arrogant. Nevertheless, his biblical absolutism leads him to insist God is the ‘God of Israel’ and has his own reasons for using ‘a small and seemingly insignificant people to be his light of the world.’⁸¹²

Ironically, while dispensationalists like Brickner follow Darby’s differentiation between Israel and the Church, and elevate contemporary Israel to a superior status above the Church, Darby himself had no desire to do so, believing that, while in this dispensation the Church had failed, Israel as a political entity had no significance either, at least until after the Rapture. Content with heaven he wrote dismissively, ‘If I want an earthly religion, I ought to be a Jew.’⁸¹³ Nevertheless, for dispensationalists, and indeed for many covenant premillennialists, the promises originally made to Abraham were, they believe, unconditional, eternal and exclusively for the physical descendants of Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. Therefore, Israel today is truly blessed. Christian Friends of Israel, for example, insist, ‘The Bible teaches

⁸¹⁰ Brickner, Future, op.cit., p94.

⁸¹¹ Ibid., pp18, 130; J. N. Darby, ‘The Character of Office in The Present Dispensation’ Collected, op.cit., Eccl. I, I, p94.

⁸¹² Brickner, Future, op.cit., p96.

⁸¹³ Darby, ‘Hopes’, op.cit., p379.

that Israel (people, land, nation) has a Divinely ordained and glorious future, and that God has neither rejected nor replaced His Jewish people.⁸¹⁴ Anne Dexter even suggests that Jewish people who have rejected Jesus are still in a more advantageous position than Gentiles:

‘Gentiles never were a covenant people. Talk of a new covenant replacing an old one is meaningless to them. Promises of God’s law written upon a renewed heart are, logically, only for those already committed to the Sinai law ... The Jews never cease to be the covenant people but, by rejecting Jesus, they simply stay in the earlier stage of revelation of the kings and prophets, there to remain until the time when all Israel will be saved.’⁸¹⁵

Dexter argues that since the unconditional covenant with the Jews was made prior to the Cross it was not annulled by it either. Such a view appears at variance with the views of Jesus, who drew a distinction between those who had not heard of him and those who had rejected him. ‘If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim to see, your guilt remains’ (John 9:41). John Fieldsend, also of CMJ, makes similar claims to Dexter. In referring to Romans 9 - 11 and the ‘mystery’ mentioned in Ephesians 3:6, he argues, ‘the revealed mystery is NOT that through the gospel Jews and Gentiles become heirs together of the grace of God but that, through the gospel “the Gentiles become HEIRS TOGETHER WITH ISRAEL”’. If physical Israel is disinherited, then there is no inheritance for the Gentiles to share in.⁸¹⁶ If, as Fieldsend claims, the inheritance of Israel is the physical land of the Middle East, then presumably since it is an inheritance shared, using his reasoning, Gentiles are heirs of the physical inheritance also. His inference that Israel’s physical restoration is an essential aspect of the gospel does not follow logically from the text. Nevertheless, it is similar to the argument used by the ICEJ, who equate the Jewish nation with the State of Israel. The Jewish people, they claim, ‘remain elect of God, and without the Jewish nation His redemptive purposes for the world will not be completed.’⁸¹⁷ Covenant theologians assert that Gentiles are indeed heirs together with

⁸¹⁴ Christian Friends of Israel, ‘Standing with Israel’, information leaflet, n.d.

⁸¹⁵ Anne Dexter, ‘The Eternal Covenant’ Shalom, February (1990), p11.

⁸¹⁶ John Fieldsend, ‘Prophecy a Dual Dimension’ Shalom, 1, (1992). Emphasis in the original.

⁸¹⁷ International Christian Zionist Congress Proclamation, International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem. 25-29 February (1996).

Jewish people in the grace of God but, in New Covenant terms, it is because when Christ died on the Cross, he completed the work of redemption.⁸¹⁸

2.4 Israel will Replace the Church

While Christian Zionists generally afford Israel a special status, dispensationalists also believe Israel will succeed the Church. It is ironic therefore that they accuse covenantalists of perpetrating a 'Replacement Theology' for suggesting the Church has replaced Israel. Hal Lindsey goes further, accusing those who reject Dispensationalism of encouraging anti-Semitism for denying a role for the State of Israel in God's future purposes. He claims covenant theology is the basis for 'the same error that founded the legacy of contempt for the Jews and ultimately led to the Holocaust of Nazi Germany.'⁸¹⁹ However, it may be argued that it is dispensationalists who advocate a replacement theology in that they claim the Church is only a parenthesis to God's continuing purposes for national Israel. Many dispensationalists believe that with the founding of the State of Israel in 1948 and the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967 under exclusive Israeli control, the 'Church Age' or 'Dispensation of Grace' is nearly over. They believe Christians will soon be secretly raptured to heaven and the Jewish people will become the centre of divine government in the world during the millennium.⁸²⁰ Before then the purpose of the Church, they claim, is to serve and 'bless Israel.'

2.5 Christians are Blessed Through Israel

One of the most frequently quoted passages in Christian Zionist literature is Genesis 12, where God promised Abraham, 'I will bless those who bless you and whoever curses you will I curse.' Although the context does not suggest that the promise applied to future generations, Scofield nevertheless claims Gentiles today are thereby blessed in association with Israel.⁸²¹

⁸¹⁸ Alec Motyer, Look to the Rock, (Leicester, Inter-Varsity Press, 1996), pp39-62; Holwerda, op. cit., pp147-176; This is the entire thesis of the Book of Hebrews.

⁸¹⁹ Lindsey, Road, op.cit., back page.

⁸²⁰ Scofield, Scofield, op. cit., pp724-725.

⁸²¹ Ibid., pp724-725.

“I will bless them that bless thee.” In fulfilment closely related to the next clause. “And curse him that curseth thee.” Wonderfully fulfilled in the history of the dispersion. It has invariably fared ill with the people who have persecuted the Jew - well with those who have protected him. The future will still more remarkably prove this principle.’⁸²²

Dispensationalists have subsequently insisted that God promises those who bless his earthly people will themselves be blessed, while those who curse the Jews will be cursed. The notion that Gentiles are ‘blessed in association with Israel’, is the principal motivation for the ICEJ, who believe Christian Zionists are called to ‘comfort Zion’ rather than bear witness to Jesus as Messiah.⁸²³ The declaration made at the ICEJ Third International Zionist Congress held in 1996 included the resolution, ‘The Lord in His zealous love for Israel and the Jewish People blesses and curses peoples and judges nations based upon their treatment of the Chosen People of Israel.’⁸²⁴ Allan MacRae claims that history is full of examples of this: ‘The fate of the nations that have injured Israel is a terrible warning that God never goes back on His promises. From Haman to Hitler, history shows how dangerous it is to hate His chosen people.’⁸²⁵ Hagee concurs: ‘The man or nation that lifts a voice or hand against Israel invites the wrath of God.’ He illustrates this by pointing out that because Great Britain voted against the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, and British officers led the Arab armies that attacked Israel, Britain is therefore, ‘now a very small kingdom.’⁸²⁶ Hagee does not comment on the fact that in 1948 the US government was just as opposed. Nevertheless, Basilea Schlink pronounces similar anathemas on those who question Israel’s expansionist agenda: ‘Anyone who disputes Israel’s right to the land of Canaan is actually opposing God and his holy covenant with the Patriarchs. He is striving against sacred, inviolable words and promises of God, which He has sworn to keep.’⁸²⁷ There is, however, no indication in the text of Genesis

⁸²² Ibid., fn. 3, p25.

⁸²³ ‘International Christian Zionist Congress Proclamation’, International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem. 25-29 February 1996.

⁸²⁴ Ibid.

⁸²⁵ Allan A. MacRae, ‘Hath God Cast Away His People?’ in Prophetic Truth Unfolding Today, edited by Charles L. Feinberg (Westwood, New Jersey, Revell, 1968), p95.

⁸²⁶ Hagee, op. cit., p37.

⁸²⁷ Basilea Schlink, Israel, My Chosen People, revised edition (Basingstoke, Marshall Pickering, 1987) p22.

12 that this promise of blessing and warning of cursing was ever intended to extend beyond Abraham. The promise, when referring to Abraham's descendants speaks of God blessing them, not of other nations blessing the Jews, still less the State of Israel. Furthermore, in Galatians, Christ is portrayed as the 'seed' of Abraham, and the promise of blessing is offered to Gentiles not on the basis of how well they treat the Jews but whether they respond to Jesus Christ.⁸²⁸

2.6 Chosen People: The Relationship Assessed

In his autobiography, Arno Gaebelein expresses the frustration of dispensationalists for the covenantal view concerning the relationship between Israel and the Church. In so doing, however, he reveals the deep seated dispensational conviction that for Jews, God's plan for them to return to the land is somehow more important than believing Jesus is their Messiah. Speaking of covenantal theology, he laments:

'Israel, that method teaches, is no longer the Israel of old, but it means the Church now. For the natural Israel no hope of a future restoration is left. All their glorious and unfulfilled promises find now their fulfilment in the Church of Jesus Christ.'⁸²⁹

Gerstner wryly observes, 'This certainly does make it hard on the Jews! When they might have had a glorious piece of real estate on the Mediterranean, all they end up with under this interpretation is Christ.'⁸³⁰

⁸²⁸ 'He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit. Brothers, let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case. The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ.' (Galatians 3:14-16); 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.' (Galatians 3:28-29). These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children.' (Galatians 4:24-25)

⁸²⁹ Arno C. Gaebelein, Half a Century, (New York, Publication Office of Our Hope, 1930), p20.

⁸³⁰ John H. Gerstner, Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth, A Critique of Dispensationalism, 2nd edition (Morgan, Pennsylvania, Soli Deo Gloria, 2000), p45.

The idea that the Jewish people continue to enjoy a special status by virtue of the covenants made with the Patriarchs is at variance with the clear and unambiguous statements of the New Testament.⁸³¹ For example, soon after the Day of Pentecost, Peter warned his Jewish audience that if they persisted in refusing to recognise Jesus as their Messiah, they would cease to be the people of God, 'Anyone who does not listen to him (Christ) will be completely cut off from among his people' (Acts 3:23). The New Testament repudiates the notion that the Jews continue to enjoy a special status or relationship with God, apart from belief in Jesus as their Messiah. Christian Zionists also fail to realise that in the Bible, 'chosenness' is the gift of God's grace in Jesus Christ to all who trust in Him, irrespective of their racial origins.⁸³² Covenant theologians argue that the term is never used exclusively of the Jewish people, apart from as members of the Church of Jesus Christ who is the 'chosen one.'⁸³³ This is explicitly taught in Galatians 4, where unbelieving Jews are described as the descendants of Hagar and Ishmael:

'Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you not aware of what the law says? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. His son by the slave woman was born in the ordinary way; but his son by the free woman was born as the result of a promise. These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is

⁸³¹ 'Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.' (Luke 3:8-9); 'You diligently study the scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.' (John 5:39-40); "'Abraham is our father," they answered. "If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did ... You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire.'" (John 8:39, 44); 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.' (John 14:6)

⁸³² 'In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.' (Ephesians 1:11); 'Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.' (Colossians 3:12); 'But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.' (1 Peter 2:9-10)

⁸³³ William W. Klein, The New Chosen People, A Corporate View of Election, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1990); Palmer O. Robertson, The Israel of God, (Phillipsburg, New Jersey, Presbyterian & Reformed, 2000).

from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother ... Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.' (Galatians 4:21-28)

The promises made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph are therefore now to be understood as fulfilled through those who demonstrate the faith of Abraham and follow Jesus Christ, for they alone are designated the true children of Abraham and Sarah. Jews who reject Jesus Christ are outside the covenant of grace and are to be regarded as children of Hagar. Paul takes Sarah's words of Genesis 21:10 and applies them to the Judaizers who were corrupting the faith of the church in Galatia, 'Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son.' (Galatians 4:30).

This may be further illustrated by the way Jesus annulled the Levitical food laws. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean'? For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean.")' (Mark 7:18-19). A vision of unclean food is specifically used by God to help the apostle Peter realise that in Christ there is now no longer any distinction between Jew and Gentile. Both are accepted as equal in the kingdom of God.

'He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat." "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean." The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."' (Acts 10:11-15)

Only when Peter encounters Cornelius does he begin to understand the implications of the vision for the way he should now view Jews and Gentiles. 'I now realise how true it is that God does not show favouritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right' (Acts 10:34-35). Logically if, to use Peter's words, 'God does not show favouritism,' from a Christian perspective, it cannot be presumed that Jews continue to enjoy a favoured or exclusive status.

It is therefore no longer appropriate for Christians to designate the Jewish people as God's 'chosen people' since the term has now been universalised to include all who trust in Jesus Christ irrespective of race as Abraham's children. Clarence Bass summarises the reasons why Darby's dispensational distinction between Israel and the Church, so central to Christian Zionism, may be seen as a departure from orthodoxy:

'It is not that exegetes prior to his time did not see a covenant between God and Israel, or a future relation of Israel to the millennial reign, but they always viewed the church as a continuation of God's single program of redemption begun in Israel. It is Dispensationalism's rigid insistence on a distinct cleavage between Israel and the church, and its belief in a later unconditional fulfilment of the Abrahamic covenant, that sets it off from the historic faith of the church.'⁸³⁴

The dispensational insistence that Israel continues to enjoy a special covenant relationship with God is, however, translated into Christian support for Restorationism and the State of Israel. This is seen in the activities of organisations such as Bridges for Peace, Christian Friends of Israel and the ICEJ, who define their mandate as 'blessing' Israel practically and defending her politically.

3. Restorationism: The Return of the Jews to Zion

From the early 19th Century, Lewis Way,⁸³⁵ Joseph Wolff,⁸³⁶ Hugh McNeile⁸³⁷ and others associated with the London Jews Society and the prophecy conferences held at Albury and Powerscourt shared a number of convictions concerning the restoration of the Jewish people. Based on their literalist reading of the Bible there was a general consensus that the Jews remained God's chosen people; through Abraham, God had given them the land of Canaan in perpetuity; the prophets promised God would restore them to their land, never to disperse them again; and the signs indicated this would happen soon. There was also some support for the view that restoration to the land

⁸³⁴ Bass, op.cit., p27.

⁸³⁵ George H. Stevens, Go, Tell My Brethren: A Short Popular History of Church Missions to Jews, (London, Olive Press, 1959), pp21-25; Kelvin Crombie, For the Love of Zion, (London, Hodder, 1991), p15.

⁸³⁶ H. P. Palmer, Joseph Wolff, His Romantic Life and Travels, (Heath Cranton, 1935); Stevens, op.cit., pp32-40.

⁸³⁷ Hugh McNeile, The Prophecies Relative to the Jewish Nation, (London, Christian Book Society, 1878).

would follow their restoration to the Lord. Hugh McNeile, like Simeon, for example, held this view.⁸³⁸ Scofield, however, suggested that restoration to the Land would occur before Israel's conversion but after the Lord had returned.⁸³⁹ From 1881, as waves of Jewish people began to emigrate to Palestine, Christian Zionists began to modify their eschatology to take account of the fact that the Jewish people were returning in unbelief.

Having established that the Jewish people would eventually return to Palestine in fulfilment of prophecy, there was little agreement as to why they would return, let alone where they would be found, since the ten northern tribes were considered lost following their exile and dispersion throughout the Assyrian Empire. Once these questions had been resolved, a more rigorous theological basis for Restorationism emerged,⁸⁴⁰ which led Christian Zionists actively to encourage and help facilitate Jewish people in the Diaspora to make aliyah and return to Palestine.

3.1 Why the Jewish People Would Return to Zion

Christian Zionists have speculated on a variety of reasons why the Jewish people would return to Palestine. In 1828, for example, Edward Irving suggested, '... the last days ... will begin to run from the time of God's appearing for his ancient people, and gathering them together to the work of destroying all Antichristian nations, of evangelising the world, and of governing it during the Millennium.' Irving saw the restoration of the Jewish people as a means of God's judging the 'Antichristian' nations. J.N. Darby took a rather different approach, believing dispensationally, the Jews would be restored to rule the earth in league with Satan. Following the Rapture of the saints, Darby insisted:

'Under the influence and direction of the Antichrist ... the Jews will unite themselves to him, in a state of rebellion, to make war with the

⁸³⁸ Ibid., p67; Charles Simeon, 'Gentiles blest by the Jews' Restoration', Horae Homileticae, XV, (London, Samuel Holdsworth, 1836), pp416, 419.

⁸³⁹ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., fn 1, p250.

⁸⁴⁰ The term 'Restorationism' is also used in a separate and contemporary sense to describe elements of the Charismatic movement. See Andrew Walker, 'Fundamentalism and Modernity: The Restoration Movement in Britain, in Lionel Caplan, ed., Studies in Religious Fundamentalism, (Basingstoke, MacMillan, 1987), pp195-210; Andrew Walker, Restoring the Kingdom, the Radical Christianity of the House Church Movement, (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1985).

Lamb ... Satan will then be displayed, who will unite the Jews with this apostate prince against heaven ... a remnant of the Jews is delivered and Antichrist destroyed.'⁸⁴¹

Scofield took a more positive line suggesting, 'According to the prophets, Israel, regathered from all nations, restored to her own land, and converted, is yet to have her greatest earthly exaltation and glory.'⁸⁴² This is closer to the position taken by Charles Simeon, one of the early leaders of LJS, who insisted that from a covenantal premillennial position, the restoration of the Jews would be related to 'their union with the Gentiles in one universal Church ... both these events will take place together, or in the nearest connection.'⁸⁴³ Crombie, in the most recent and comprehensive history of CMJ, insists to the contrary, 'From its inception in 1809, the LJS had advocated the physical restoration of Israel prior to its spiritual restoration.'⁸⁴⁴ While all were convinced the return of the Jewish people to Palestine was imminent and predicted in the Bible, there was clearly no consensus as to why this would happen; what the connection was between Israel and the Church; between repentance and restoration; or national Israel and the remnant.

3.2 Finding the Jewish People to Return to Zion

The preoccupation of the later Albury conferences and of Joseph Wolff especially, became the quest to find the 'lost tribes' of Israel, so necessary if a complete restoration to Palestine was to occur. In 1822, George Faber spoke at the annual meeting of the LJS. His talk dwelt on the dating of the termination of the 'Times of the Gentiles' and on the restoration of the Jewish people.⁸⁴⁵ A report was also received that Jews had been discovered in India and China and caused great interest. Apparently, they longed to return to Palestine. McNeile assured: 'They think that the time of His appearance will soon arrive, at which they much rejoice, believing that at Jerusalem they will

⁸⁴¹ J. N. Darby, 'The Hopes,' Collected, op.cit., Prophetic I, II, p379.

⁸⁴² Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., fn 1. p1206.

⁸⁴³ Charles Simeon, 'Conversion of the Jews and Gentiles' Horae Homileticae X, (London, Samuel Holdsworth, 1836), p240; 'Conversion of the Jews Gradual' Horae Homileticae VIII, (London, Samuel Holdsworth, 1832), pp10-14.

⁸⁴⁴ Crombie, op. cit., p163.

⁸⁴⁵ McNeile, op.cit., p64.

see their God, worship Him only, and be despised no more.⁸⁴⁶ After another report was received at the 1828 Albury conference, McNeile assessed its significance:

‘The number of scattered members of the tribe of Judah and the half-tribe of Benjamin, rather exceeds than falls short of five millions. Now, if to this number be added the many other millions to be found in the different countries in the East, what an immense power would be brought into action were the spirit of the nationality once aroused.’⁸⁴⁷

As travel beyond Europe gradually improved through the 19th Century, and as anti-Semitic pogroms in Russia and Eastern Europe caused increasing numbers of Jews to flee, the sense of urgency for their restoration grew.

3.3 The Theological Basis for Restorationism

Like Irving and Darby, Scofield taught that it was God’s intention to restore the Jewish people to Palestine. His Bible notes provide the most detailed explanation of the basis for the Jewish restoration. To justify his dispensational scheme and a glorious future for Israel in the kingdom age, Scofield claimed that ‘the gift of the land is modified by prophecies of three dispossessions and restorations.’ He goes on to argue that since two dispossessions and restorations had been accomplished, Israel as a nation was now in a third dispersion, ‘from which she will be restored at the return of the Lord as King under the Davidic Covenant.’⁸⁴⁸ Scofield’s argument for a third return is based on two deductions that follow from his literalist hermeneutic. First, that Israel had never taken all the land promised to Abraham, and second, that not all the messianic promises had been fulfilled during the first advent. In linking these two together, Scofield speculated that the return to the land would follow, not precede, the return of the Messiah.⁸⁴⁹ In the note accompanying Deuteronomy 30:1-9, Scofield delineates seven parts to this process under the heading ‘The Palestinian Covenant’:

- ‘(1) Dispersion for disobedience, v.1 (Deut. 28:63-68. Gen. 15:18).
- (2) The future repentance of Israel while in the dispersion, v.2.
- (3) The return of the Lord, v.3 (Amos 9:9-14; Acts 15:14-17).

⁸⁴⁶ William A. Walmsley, ‘The State of Israel: Biblical Prophecy or Biblical Falacy?’ in Judaism or Zionism? edited by Eaford & Ajaz, (London, Zed, 1986), p41.

⁸⁴⁷ McNeile, op.cit., p435.

⁸⁴⁸ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., note, p25.

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid., fn. 1, p250.

- (4) Restoration to the land, v.5 (Isa. 11:11; Jer. 23:3-8; Ezk. 37:21-25).
- (5) National conversion, v.6 (Rom. 11:26, 27; Hos. 2:14-16).
- (6) The judgement of Israel's oppressors, v.7 (Isa.14:1,2; Mt. 25:31-46).
- (7) National prosperity, v.9 (Amos 9:11-14)⁸⁵⁰

Schuyler English, in the 1967 New Scofield Reference Bible⁸⁵¹ revision, consistently adds to Scofield's original notes to give a more explicit dispensational reading of key texts. In many cases references to contemporary Israel are appended to verses on which Scofield originally made no comment at all.⁸⁵² For example, on Deuteronomy 30:5, Schuyler English adds the following innovation:

'No passage of scripture has found fuller confirmation in the events of history than Dt. 28 - 30. In AD 70 the Jewish nation was scattered throughout the world because of disobedience and rejection of Christ. In world-wide dispersion they experienced exactly the punishments foretold by Moses. On the other hand, when the nation walked in conformity with the will of God, it enjoyed the blessing and protection of God. In the twentieth Century the exiled people were restored to their homeland.'⁸⁵³

Inexplicably, Scofield's original chronology in which the Lord returns before Israel is restored, which is retained by Schuyler English, is nevertheless contradicted by the final sentence he adds to the footnote.⁸⁵⁴ No explanation is given for the apparent contradiction between Israel's continued 'disobedience and rejection of Christ' and yet their restoration 'to their homeland.'

Scofield's claim that Israel never possessed all the land promised to Abraham, is also at variance with the books of Joshua and Nehemiah.⁸⁵⁵ The author of Joshua insists, 'So Joshua took the entire land, just as the Lord had directed Moses.' (Joshua 11:23). At the end of the book of Joshua, the same assessment is repeated but more emphatically, 'So the Lord gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their forefathers, and they took possession of it and settled there ... Not one of all the Lord's good promises to the house of Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.' (21:43-45). It is hard to see how this

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid., fn. 1, p250.

⁸⁵¹ Schuyler English, New, op.cit.,

⁸⁵² Ibid., p19.

⁸⁵³ Ibid., p217.

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid., p217.

⁸⁵⁵ Joshua 11:23; 21:43-45; Nehemiah 9:22-23.

fulfilment can be reconciled with the futurist claims of dispensationalists. Neither Scofield nor Schuyler English footnote either passage. However, Scofield, like many dispensationalists since,⁸⁵⁶ bases his belief in a third restoration on Ezekiel 37 and the vision of the valley of the dry bones.⁸⁵⁷ Following the publication of the Balfour Declaration, for example, a CMJ editorial of 1918 was one of the first to assert that a Jewish State would be the fulfilment of Ezekiel's vision:

‘We believe we are actually seeing that come to pass which was prophesied by Ezekiel (ch. 37) viz., the movement amongst the “dry bones” of Israel, bone is uniting with bone ... The uniting element being the possibility in the very near future of their being allowed to organise a Jewish State in their own God-given country of Palestine.’⁸⁵⁸

With the benefit of hindsight, Lindsey also elaborates on this, using capitals for emphasis in case his readers miss the plot:

‘Ezekiel 37:7-8 ... is phase one of the prophecy which predicts the PHYSICAL RESTORATION of the Nation without Spiritual life which began May 14, 1948 ... Ezekiel 37:9-10 ... is phase two of the prophecy which predicts the SPIRITUAL REBIRTH of the nation AFTER they are physically restored to the land as a nation ... The Lord identifies the bones in the allegory as representing “the whole house of Israel.” It is crystal clear that this is literally predicting the restoration and rebirth of the whole nation at the time of Messiah’s coming [Ezekiel 37:21-27].’⁸⁵⁹

It is difficult to conceive how such an entirely futuristic interpretation would have brought comfort to the Jewish exiles in Babylon to whom Ezekiel was sent to minister, yet this and similar passages provide the motivation for the restorationist movement today.

Bridges for Peace and Exobus, for example, both use the term ‘fishing’ to describe their outreach to Jewish people, based on Jeremiah 16:16, “But now I will send for many fishermen,” declares the Lord, “and they will catch them.”⁸⁶⁰ Zionists use this passage as a ‘carrot and stick’ reminding Jews that the verse goes on to warn how God will also send hunters, ‘and they will

⁸⁵⁶ Lindsey, Late, op.cit., p51.

⁸⁵⁷ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., fn. 1, p881.

⁸⁵⁸ Kelvin Crombie, ‘CMJ and the Restoration of Israel’ Shalom, 1, (1998). See also Anne Dexter, ‘The Eternal Covenant, Part 3, Exile and Restoration,’ Shalom, June (1989), pp10-11.

⁸⁵⁹ Lindsey, Road, op.cit., p180. Emphasis in the original.

⁸⁶⁰ Patricia Golan, ‘On Wings of Faith’ Jerusalem Post, 13 January (2002).

hunt them down on every mountain and every hill and from the crevices of the rocks.’ Jewish people in the Diaspora are encouraged to return to Israel but are also warned that if they delay, further persecution may come.⁸⁶¹ The context of the verse, however, clearly indicates that Jeremiah is comparing an impending return to the land with the Exodus from Egypt, not with two previous returns. Furthermore both ‘fishermen’ and ‘hunters’, are terms used to describe a conquering army. In the next verse Jeremiah explains why God was going to send them. ‘My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from me, nor is their sin concealed from my eyes. I will repay them double for their wickedness and their sin because they have defiled my land.’ (Jeremiah 16:17). In this passage, therefore, the fishermen were not being sent to rescue but to discipline. Only after Israel had repented of their previous sins in the land was there any prospect of a return to it.

This arbitrary and futurist interpretation is one of several examples in which dispensationalists mishandle biblical texts concerning the exile and restoration in order to maintain their dispensational scheme. The prophets, while warning of judgement and chastisement, also offered the promise of return and this was fulfilled under Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah. However, Scofield and Lindsey insist promises such as those made by Jeremiah and Ezekiel refer to a third return thousands of years later on the premise that certain messianic aspects have not yet been fulfilled literally and completely.⁸⁶²

Scofield also claims two passages in the New Testament speak of this third return, Luke 1:30-33 and Acts 15:13-17. Scofield dwells on the latter in which James simply quotes from Amos to show that Pentecost had been predicted long ago, promising that Gentiles would also seek the Lord along with Jews. ‘After this I will return and rebuild David’s fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things that have been known for ages’ (Acts 15:16-18). For Scofield, ‘dispensationally, this is the most important passage in the NT’, since he claims, ‘It gives the

⁸⁶¹ <http://www.exodus.org>

⁸⁶² Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., fn. 1, p795.

divine purpose for this age, and for the beginning of the next.⁸⁶³ Scofield, however, reads considerably more into this passage than is there and obscures its most obvious and direct meaning. Scofield interpreted the ‘after this’ not simply as meaning ‘after James’ or even ‘after Pentecost,’ but rather 1900 years afterwards, God would some day ‘rebuild the tabernacle of David’ in a literal and permanent return of Jewish people to the Land. In doing so Scofield ignores the fact that James is simply appealing to Amos to vindicate the universality of the gospel and the results of the 1st Century Gentile mission in particular.⁸⁶⁴ If this is seen as ‘spiritualising’ the Old Testament text, then it must be acknowledged that it is James who does so.⁸⁶⁵ Using the passage to teach a predetermined and futuristic plan for national Israel, separate from the Church, appears to be the opposite of what James intended. Scofield and Schuyler English thereby undermine the intention to show that Jews and Gentiles are now united in Jesus Christ and are members together of the one Church.

Lindsey takes the same approach with the analogy of the ‘fig tree’ in Matthew 24. Whereas 1st Century Christians understood Jesus to be warning them to observe the signs and flee Jerusalem when the city came under Roman siege, Lindsey reverses its meaning. He claims Jesus was predicting the restoration of the Jews to Palestine in the 20th Century rather than their departure in the 1st Century:

‘But the most important sign in Matthew has to be the restoration of the Jews to the land in the rebirth of Israel. Even the figure of speech “fig tree” has been a historic symbol of national Israel. When the Jewish people, after nearly 2,000 years of exile, under relentless persecution, became a nation again on 14 May 1948 the “fig tree” put forth its first leaves.’⁸⁶⁶

⁸⁶³ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., fn. 1, pp1169-1170

⁸⁶⁴ “‘In that day I will restore David’s fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it as it used to be, so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear my name,” declares the LORD, who will do these things. “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman and the planter by the one treading grapes. New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from all the hills. I will bring back my exiled people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them.’ (Amos 9:11-13).

⁸⁶⁵ Fuller, op.cit., p180. Also James Barr, Fundamentalism, (London, SCM, 1977), p355.

⁸⁶⁶ Lindsey, Late, op.cit., p53.

Nothing in Matthew 24, however, indicates that Jesus intended his hearers to understand that he was promising Israel would become a nation state once more. The New Testament is silent on the question. Nevertheless, Lindsey has popularised the notion that the return of Jewish people to Palestine since 1948 is the fulfilment of biblical prophecy. Lindsey speaks repeatedly of the 'rebirth' of Israel,⁸⁶⁷ insisting, 'The nation of Israel cannot be ignored; we see the Jews as a miracle of history ... all the unconditional covenants ... were made only with the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as a unique nation.'⁸⁶⁸

Nowhere, however, is a third re-gathering to the land explicitly mentioned in the Bible. Each passage quoted by Scofield or Lindsey refers either to the first or second re-gathering to the land, or as in Amos 9, to Pentecost. It is significant that, following the rebuilding of Solomon's Temple in 516 BC there are no biblical references to any further return to the Land. For example, when Paul lists the present benefits that still pertain to the Jewish people in Romans 9, he does not mention the Land or kingdom as one of them.⁸⁶⁹

More conclusive, however, are the categorical statements made by Jesus in which he specifically rules out any notion that Israel would enjoy a divinely mandated national identity as a kingdom in the future. 'Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.' (Matthew 21:43). Indeed, Jesus insists that the subjects of the kingdom, that is, unbelieving Jews, will be 'thrown outside' (Matthew 8:10-12); none of those who were originally invited 'will get a taste of my banquet' (Luke 14:15-24); that the vineyard will be rented, 'to other tenants'; to 'a people who will produce its fruit'; to those who will come from the 'roads and country lanes'; from 'the east and west and will take their

⁸⁶⁷ Lindsey, Israel, op.cit., p19; Lindsey, 1980's, op.cit., p11.

⁸⁶⁸ Lindsey, Late, op.cit., p45; Road, op.cit., p186.

⁸⁶⁹ 'Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the Temple worship and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.' (Romans 9:4-5). W. D. Davies, The Gospel and the Land, (Berkeley, Los Angeles, University of California, 1974), pp166-167, 366ff.

places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.’⁸⁷⁰ Gerstner interprets this as signalling:

‘... the end of the nation of Israel as the chosen people of God. They have been tried and found wanting. God’s patience has been exhausted. If there were any doubts about that being the obvious meaning of the words, the parable on which they are based would utterly eliminate any lingering procrastination.’⁸⁷¹

This is substantiated by the fact that the Greek word used for nation (ethnos) is invariably used to describe the Gentiles. In context, its use in the parable of the tenants clearly relates to and contrasts with the disobedience of the Jewish nation.⁸⁷² Instead of attempting to explain how Jesus might be describing a temporary rejection of the Jews, Ryrie appears to reverse the intention of the text to fit a dispensational framework. He asserts ‘The kingdom of God shall be taken from you (leaders of Israel), and given to a nation (Israel) bringing forth the fruits thereof.’⁸⁷³ Schuyler English in the New Scofield Study Bible repeats this interpretation.⁸⁷⁴

Based on passages such as these, covenantal theologians therefore argue that there is no theological significance to the founding of the State of Israel in 1948. This has nevertheless not hindered Christian Zionists from encouraging and facilitating the emigration of Jewish people to Israel from Russia and Eastern Europe.

3.4 Restorationism Assessed

The 19th Century restorationist movement arose from the literal and futurist hermeneutic of the early dispensationalists who, having written off the Church, believed the Old Testament predicted a spiritual revival among the Jewish people, restored to their land in belief and associated with the return of the Lord. This would all occur, they believed, in their lifetime. Prophecies that had already been fulfilled in the return of the Jews from Babylonian exile

⁸⁷⁰ Oswald Allis, Prophecy and the Church, An Examination of the Claim of Dispensationalists that the Christian Church is a Mystery, (Philadelphia, Presbyterian & Reformed, 1945), p78.

⁸⁷¹ Gerstner, op.cit., pp190-191.

⁸⁷² Ibid., p191.

⁸⁷³ Charles Ryrie, The Basis of the Premillennial Faith, (Neptune, New Jersey, Loizeaux Brothers, 1953), p72.

⁸⁷⁴ Schuyler English, op.cit., p1005.

were applied to their own generation.

While it is true that only 50,000 exiles had returned in around 538 BC, compared with the estimated 3 million that had come out of Egypt a thousand years earlier;⁸⁷⁵ and although they returned to only a small part of the original territory; and built only a small replica of Solomon's Temple; God's prophets nevertheless describe a restoration so glorious that it could not be contained within the boundaries of any literal realisation. Haggai and Zechariah, for example, describe a glorious future where Jerusalem becomes a great city surrounded by a wall of fire and into which the Gentile nations stream to worship. As Palmer Robertson explains, the imagery here metaphorically bursts the limitations of the Old Covenant wine skin.⁸⁷⁶

The New Testament describes how this vision found its fulfilment, as Peter quotes from Joel, Stephen from Isaiah and James from Amos, in the Pentecostal outpouring of God's Spirit which demonstrated that because of the death of Jesus, 'God does not show favouritism, but accepts those from every nation who fear him and do what is right' (Acts 10:34-35). Nevertheless, by re-erecting the wall of division between the Church and Israel, the restorationists saw in the discovery of the lost tribes, the rise of the Zionist movement and the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, signs that God was apparently keeping his original promises to the Jewish people.

Political dispensationalists, especially, have also distanced themselves from any linkage between the repentance and restoration which was expected by the prophets, as organisations such as ICEJ and Exobus, for example, have worked ever more closely with the secular Jewish Agency to facilitate the return of Jewish people to Zion.

4. Eretz Israel: Reclaiming Judea, Samaria and Beyond

Since Christian Zionists believe the Jews remain God's chosen people and that their final restoration is prophesied, it follows that the promises made to Abraham concerning their original inheritance in the land of Canaan must also

⁸⁷⁵ Based on Exodus 12:37 which mentions 600,000 Jewish men plus women and children as well as 'many other people'. Exodus 38:26 mentions 603,550 men.

⁸⁷⁶ O Palmer Robertson, *The Israel of God, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, (Phillipsburg, New Jersey, Presbyterian & Reformed, 2000), pp16-17.

still apply. An examination of the scriptural claim to the land will lead to an analysis of how the borders of Eretz Israel are defined.

4.1 Eretz Israel: In Prophecy Fulfilled

The claim to the land is based on the covenant God made with Abraham in Genesis 12, 13 and 15. Fruchtenbaum says Abraham is ‘commanded to make what amounts to the first Holy Land tour of Israel, for all the land that he sees on its length and breadth is his.’⁸⁷⁷ The covenant is later confirmed to Isaac in Genesis 26 and Jacob in Genesis 28. Both Isaac and Jacob are promised that they and their descendants will possess the land. By the time of Moses, the Israelites are reminded that their residence in the land was, however, conditional. They are warned that if they rebel against God they would be ‘scattered among the nations’ (Leviticus 26:33), but that if they confess their sins, ‘I will remember my covenant with Jacob and my covenant with Isaac, and my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land’ (Leviticus 26:42). Invariably, however, Christian Zionists have minimised the conditionality of the covenants in favour of Israel’s unconditional ‘rights’. McNeile, for example, at the annual LJS conference of 1822, expressed the hope that the Jewish people would, ‘unite in claiming possession of that land which was given to them as a “heritage forever.”’⁸⁷⁸

During the 19th Century, with the rise of the Jewish Zionist movement, from 1948 with the founding of the State of Israel and 1967 with the capture of East Jerusalem, the contemporary State of Israel has increasingly come to be seen as the realisation of God’s covenant promises. As Hal Lindsey has expressed it, ‘To Israel as a nation were made unique promises ... they were the only nation that was promised a specific plot of land, a city, and a kingdom.’⁸⁷⁹ David Brickner reflects the views of contemporary Christian Zionists generally when he affirms, ‘I believe the modern day State of Israel is a miracle of God and a fulfilment of Bible prophecy.’⁸⁸⁰ John Hagee and John Walvoord draw out the theological significance of these events. Hagee, for

⁸⁷⁷ Arnold Fruchtenbaum, ‘The Land is Mine,’ *Issues*, 2.4. <http://www.jewsforjesus.org>

⁸⁷⁸ McNeile, op.cit., p435.

⁸⁷⁹ Lindsey, *Road*, op.cit., p197.

⁸⁸⁰ David Brickner, ‘Don’t Pass Over Israel’s Jubilee,’ *Jews for Jesus Newsletter*, April (1998).

example, sees 1948 as a vindication of Dispensationalism's distinction between Israel and the Church. 'On May 15, 1948, a theological earthquake levelled replacement theology when the State of Israel was reborn after 2000 years of wandering.'⁸⁸¹ Similarly, Walvoord claims the events of 1967 have 'to a large extent revealed the premises and conclusions of both the amillenarians and postmillenarians to be in error.'⁸⁸² Neither deduction necessarily follows unless one accepts *a priori* a literal hermeneutic and futurist eschatology. Nevertheless, the question being asked increasingly is not whether the Jewish people have a claim to the land of Canaan, for that is assumed, but rather, how much land.

4.2 Eretz Israel: Its Borders Defined

To many Christian Zionists the present borders of Israel, even including the disputed Occupied Territories, are only a fraction of those God intends for the Jewish people. Darby is quite explicit in describing the methods and motives to be used as well as the extent of their legitimate territory:

'The first thing, then, which the Lord will do will be to purify His land (the land which belongs to the Jews) of the Tyrians, the Philistines, the Sidonians; of Edom and Moab, and Amon - of all the wicked, in short from the Nile to the Euphrates. It will be done by the power of Christ in favour of His people re-established by His goodness.'⁸⁸³

Darby therefore sees the restoration of the Jewish people as a means to 'purify' the wicked from the land, in terms similar to those used in Joshua. Although Darby saw this as an act of God, it is nevertheless clear he did not expect this would lead to a peaceful transition of ownership. It is rare to find contemporary Christian Zionists being as explicit. Surprisingly, however, it is largely among the writings of messianic Zionists such as Arnold Fruchtenbaum,⁸⁸⁴ Louis Goldberg⁸⁸⁵ and David Brickner,⁸⁸⁶ all associated

⁸⁸¹ John Hagee, Final Dawn Over Jerusalem, (Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 1998), p113-114.

⁸⁸² John F. Walvoord, 'Will Israel Build a Temple in Jerusalem?' Bibliotheca Sacra, 125 April (1968), p102.

⁸⁸³ Darby, 'The Hopes,' Collected, op.cit., Prophetic I, II, p380.

⁸⁸⁴ Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, 'This Land is Mine,' Issues, 2.4. <http://www.jewsforjesus.org;Israecology>, p573.

⁸⁸⁵ Louis Goldberg, 'Whose Land Is It?' Issues, 4. 2.

⁸⁸⁶ Brickner, Future, op.cit., p90.

with Jews for Jesus, together with Randall Price,⁸⁸⁷ that the geographical extent of 'Eretz Israel' is delineated most clearly. Fruchtenbaum explains that the 'exact' borders are 'from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates.' He clarifies that the former border refers to 'the most eastern branch of the Nile Delta, which now goes along the line of the modern-day Suez Canal.' Price provides a map showing the boundaries to include parts of Egypt, Lebanon, Syria as well as the West Bank.⁸⁸⁸ At no point in history have the Jews ever possessed all this land even under king David or Solomon. So Fruchtenbaum deduces, 'Since God cannot lie, these things must yet come to pass ... a Jewish State must be formed where they and their descendants can dwell ... there will be a time when the Jewish people will possess all of the Promised Land.'⁸⁸⁹ While political dispensationalists encourage Israel to occupy this land by force, Fruchtenbaum believes this will only be fulfilled after the Messiah returns, when presumably the Middle East has been considerably depopulated and subjugated following the battle of Armageddon.

4.3 Eretz Israel Assessed

Lindsey and Fruchtenbaum, like virtually all Christian Zionists, insist that the Abrahamic covenant remains unconditional.⁸⁹⁰ However, subsequent references to the land in scripture stress that humility and meekness rather than 'chosenness' became a precondition for inheriting or remaining in the land, whereas arrogance or oppression were legitimate grounds for exile. For example, the Psalmist explains, 'But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy great peace' (Psalm 37:11).⁸⁹¹ Zionists also downplay the repeated warnings in the Law as well as the Hebrew Prophets which stress that the Land belongs to God and residence there is always conditional. For example, 'The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants' (Leviticus 25:23). Because the Land belongs to God, it cannot be permanently bought or sold, let alone stolen or confiscated as has

⁸⁸⁷ Randall Price, Jerusalem in Prophecy, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1998), p98.

⁸⁸⁸ Ibid., p98.

⁸⁸⁹ Fruchtenbaum, 'This' op.cit.

⁸⁹⁰ Lindsey, Road, op.cit., p186; Fruchtenbaum, Israelology, op.cit., p573.

⁸⁹¹ Jesus universalises this promise, 'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.' (Matthew 5:5).

occurred in the Occupied Territories since 1967. The Land is never at the disposal of Israel for its national purposes. Instead it is Israel who are at the disposal of God's purposes. The Jews remain tenants in God's Land. The ethical requirements for continued occupancy are clearly outlined in the Law.⁸⁹² The prophet Ezekiel amplifies the same warnings:

'Thus says the Lord God of Israel: You shed blood, yet you would keep possession on the land? You rely on your sword, you do abominable things ... yet you would keep possession of the land? ... I will make the land a desolate waste, and her proud strength will come to an end, and the mountains of Israel will become desolate so that no one will cross them. Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I have made the land a desolate waste because of all the detestable things they have done.' (Ezekiel 33:25-29)

On the basis of sober warnings such as this, the question may legitimately be asked whether, due to its present expansionist policies, Israel might not expect another exile rather than a restoration.

From a New Testament perspective, the contrast between contemporary Zionist expectations and the historic Christian hope could not be greater. Abraham's descendants, both Jewish and Gentile, are now promised not just Canaan but the entire world, indeed the cosmos itself.⁸⁹³ Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, quotes and expands on Psalm 37, to promise that the meek will inherit much more than the Land. Now they will inherit the earth. Paul explores this profound realisation in Romans, where he concludes that 'Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world' not through the Law but by faith (Romans 4:13). It is no longer merely a portion of the earth that is the consummation of God's work of redeeming a fallen world, but one in which the whole cosmos participates. So paradise restored is not just a return to the Land but a reconstructed cosmos, a new heaven and a new earth which becomes the home of the resurrected

⁸⁹² 'Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, because this is how the nations that I am going to drive out before you became defiled. Even the land was defiled; so I punished it for its sin, and the land vomited out its inhabitants. But you must keep my decrees and my laws. The native-born and the aliens living among you must not do any of these detestable things, for all these things were done by the people who lived in the land before you, and the land became defiled. And if you defile the land, it will vomit you out as it vomited out the nations that were before you.' (Leviticus 18:24-28)

⁸⁹³ See Ephesians 1:1-23 which refers to our inheritance, 'in the heavenly realms.'

faithful remnant.⁸⁹⁴ John Stott concludes, 'Instead, according to the apostles, the Old Testament promises are fulfilled in Christ and in the international community of Christ. A return to Jewish nationalism would seem incompatible with this New Testament perspective of the international community of Jesus.'⁸⁹⁵ The tension is clearly evident in the polarisation of opinion concerning the status of Jerusalem.

5. Jerusalem: The Eternal and Exclusive Jewish Capital

The place and purpose of Jerusalem, or 'Zion' as it is sometimes called,⁸⁹⁶ is deeply felt within Christian Zionism. While Brearley accepts that neither land nor Jerusalem is intrinsically holy, she still insists, 'Jerusalem is the place where the Lord has 'chosen to place his name' (Deut. 14:23; 16:2, 6, 11; 26:2), and where he placed the Jews.' Lindsey also points out that 'Jerusalem's importance in history is infinitely beyond its size and economic significance. From ages past, Jerusalem has been the most important city on this planet ... More prophecies have been made concerning Jerusalem than any other place on earth.'⁸⁹⁷ The significance of Jerusalem within Christian Zionism will be examined in the context of the fulfilment of prophecy and how this shapes its eschatological future.

5.1 Jerusalem in History: The Times of the Gentiles

The most frequently quoted biblical prophecy concerning the contemporary Jewish claim to Jerusalem is found in Luke 21:24. Jesus said, 'Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.' Revelation 11:2 says that the Gentile 'trampling' of Jerusalem would continue for only '42 months', so dating this event is problematic. Scofield suggests that the 'times of the Gentiles' began with the Babylonian captivity of Judah under Nebuchadnezzar and will be 'brought to an end by the destruction of Gentile world-power by the ... coming of the Lord in glory (Rev. 19:11,21),

⁸⁹⁴ O Palmer Robertson, 'A new-covenant perspective on the land' in The Land of Promise, edited by Philip Johnston and Peter Walker, (Downers Grove, Illinois, Inter-Varsity, 2000), p121-141.

⁸⁹⁵ John Stott, 'Foreword,' in The Land of Promise, edited by Philip Johnston and Peter Walker, (Downers Grove, Illinois, Inter-Varsity, 2000), pp10-11.

⁸⁹⁶ Zion more specifically refers to the hill on the western edge of the Old City of Jerusalem.

⁸⁹⁷ Lindsey, Israel, op.cit., p20.

until which time Jerusalem is politically subject to Gentile rule.⁸⁹⁸ With hindsight, however, Schuyler English revises the last sentence to read more ambiguously, 'Until then Jerusalem will be, as Christ said, "trampled on by the Gentiles."⁸⁹⁹ He does this because Jerusalem is no longer 'subject to Gentile rule' but clearly not, as Scofield had predicted, as a result of the 'coming of the Lord in glory.' Mike Evans believes Daniel 12:12 reveals the year when Jerusalem would be liberated from Gentile control. 'Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1335 days.' Evans claims this verse remained a 'mystery' until General Allenby entered Jerusalem and,

'... set it free from times of treading down of the Gentiles, an event which Jesus had predicted two thousand years before ... The year when Jerusalem was set free from four hundred years of Turkish rule was 1917, which was the date stamped on the Turkish coins minted that year. And on the other side of the coin was the year 1335, according to the Jewish calendar.'⁹⁰⁰

Evans' exegesis is problematic in so far as the preceding verse in Daniel 12 refers to the time when the Temple would be desecrated, 45 'days' before the end. On the assumption that a day equals a year, in his chronology this 'abomination' in the Temple would therefore have had to have occurred in 1872. Most Christian Zionists regard 1967 as the significant date when these prophecies were fulfilled. The Israeli capture of the Old City and East Jerusalem from Jordan in only six days was seen as nothing less than a miracle. For many it marked not only the end of the 'times of the Gentiles' but also signalled the imminent return of the Messiah. Derek Prince asks, 'At what point did the control of the area pass out of Gentile hands and back into Jewish hands? The answer is in no doubt: it was in June 1967.'⁹⁰¹ Ulla Jarvilehto of the ICEJ describes the verse as 'biblical politics concerning the status of Jerusalem.'⁹⁰² Jan Willem van der Hoeven, whose book Babylon or Jerusalem? carries a foreword by Teddy Kollek, the former Mayor of

⁸⁹⁸ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., fn. 1. p1345.

⁸⁹⁹ Schuyler English, op.cit., pp1330-1331.

⁹⁰⁰ Mike Evans, Israel, America's Key to Survival, (Plainfield, New Jersey, Haven, 1980), p126.

⁹⁰¹ Derek Prince, The Last Word on the Middle East, (Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Derek Prince Ministries, 1982), p95.

⁹⁰² Ulla Jarvilehto, 'Political Action for Israel,' Christians and Israel, Essays in Biblical Zionism and on Islamic Fundamentalism, (Jerusalem, International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, 1996), pp58-59.

Jerusalem, sees the prediction Jesus made in Luke 21:24 as now fulfilled. 'Finally, after nearly 2,000 long years, the Jewish people were reunited with their ancient city and capital. Jerusalem - literally trodden under foot by so many different nations - was back in the fold of her own people just as Christ had foretold.'⁹⁰³ Wendell Stearns explains why the events of 1967 resulted in a 'reunification' of Jerusalem: 'The artificial boundary line that had divided Jerusalem was broken down in 1967 when Israel, in the miraculous Six-Day War, reunited the city which had been "trodden down by the Gentiles" for nearly two thousand years. Jerusalem was again under Jewish jurisdiction.'⁹⁰⁴ Lindsey, however, suggests the 'times' are not quite over. On the basis of the same verse, he believes attempts to negotiate a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict will always remain futile. He insists the 'Bible tells us' that the dispute over Jerusalem and indeed Israel's borders will never be settled by any peace agreement, 'nor any whiz-bang diplomatic breakthrough.' Jerusalem will, he insists, continue to be 'a stumbling block for the entire world ... we are literally witnessing the end of the times of the Gentiles.'⁹⁰⁵ A year later, in 1995, Lindsey rephrased the last sentence to give more emphasis to his timing, 'We are literally witnessing the last hours of the times of the Gentiles. God's focus is shifting back to His people Israel.'⁹⁰⁶ By 'hours' it is assumed Lindsey was speaking metaphorically. If it is problematic trying to make sense of the past based on a futurist reading of prophecy, interpreting the future is even more controversial.

5.2 Jerusalem in Eschatology: Ground Zero

It would be an understatement to suggest that the future described for Jerusalem by Christian Zionists is anything but bleak. Hagee claims, 'Jerusalem the golden is caught in a supernatural crossfire ... We are racing toward the end of time, and Israel lies in the eye of the storm.'⁹⁰⁷ In Matthew 24 and Luke 21 Jesus describes events about to occur in Jerusalem. In

⁹⁰³ Jan Willem van der Hoeven, Babylon or Jerusalem? (Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, Destiny Image, 1993), p152.

⁹⁰⁴ Wendell Stearns, Biblical Zionism, (Hilversum, Holland, Moriah Foundation, 1994), p123.

⁹⁰⁵ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., pp162, 164.

⁹⁰⁶ Lindsey, Final, op.cit., p95.

Matthew the sign is the desecration of the Temple, in Luke it is the armies surrounding Jerusalem. The instructions Jesus gave in both accounts are the same: flee Judea for the mountains and escape. Following his literalist hermeneutic, however, Scofield argues that whereas in Luke's account Jesus is predicting the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 AD, in Matthew's account Jesus is referring to a still future crisis, 'after the manifestation of the "abomination."' To explain why the instructions are virtually identical, Scofield claims, 'as the circumstances in both cases will be similar, so are the warnings. In the former case Jerusalem will be destroyed; in the latter it will be delivered by divine interposition.'⁹⁰⁸ Scofield's interpretation leaves unanswered the question, why, if in Matthew's account the city will be delivered, does Jesus still warn everyone to flee. It is also hard to imagine that those listening would have deduced anything other than that Jesus was speaking to them.

Typical of other futurists, Lindsey believes the prophecies in Zechariah 12-14 amplify the account in Matthew and describe events that are about to take place. The fearful siege of Jerusalem will, he claims, be conducted by the Soviet army.⁹⁰⁹ He deduces that these chapters could only be describing contemporary events because it is clear that, 'the Jews would have to be dwelling in and have possession of the ancient city of Jerusalem at the time of the Messiah's triumphant advent.'⁹¹⁰ He argues that Armageddon will be triggered by a dispute over Jerusalem, indeed 'we've got that dispute right now' he discerns. Jerusalem's fate, he argues, and by implication the cause of the next world war, will be a direct result of the failure of the West to support Israel. 'As a matter of fact, the West helped guarantee the world a dispute over Jerusalem by forcing the Israelis into a pact with the Palestinians.'⁹¹¹ How much of Jerusalem will be left standing when Jesus returns is a matter of conjecture, given Lindsey's terrifying description of the war of Armageddon:

⁹⁰⁷ Hagee, *op.cit.*, p131.

⁹⁰⁸ Scofield, *op. cit.*, fn. 1, p1033.

⁹⁰⁹ Lindsey, *Late*, *op.cit.*, p54.

⁹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p55.

⁹¹¹ Lindsey, *Planet*, *op.cit.*, p247.

‘The Bible also makes clear that Jerusalem - the focal point of the endtimes fighting - will be vanquished by Israel’s enemies in the hours just before the Lord comes. In fact, it seems that the destruction of the holy city is the final straw that angers God and provokes Jesus’ return.’⁹¹²

If such an appalling prospect is imminent as Lindsey suggests, it is surprising that he does not invoke Jesus’ warnings in Matthew 24 to ‘flee to the mountains’ and encourage Jerusalemites today, as Jesus did then, to save themselves from the terrifying onslaught to come. Lindsey does, however, offer some comfort to the survivors. During the millennium, he promises, ‘Jerusalem will be the spiritual centre of the entire world ... all people of the earth will come annually to worship Jesus who will rule there’, indeed he claims it will become something of a tourist attraction.⁹¹³ Lindsey’s predictions highlight the contradiction, rarely admitted by Christian Zionists, that their futurist eschatology leads them to expect both the exaltation and destruction of most Jewish people.

Taking a stand against God’s plans for Jerusalem ‘spells disaster’, claims Jarvilehto of the ICEJ. Quoting Zechariah 12:3, ‘I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves’, she believes God is currently using the status of Jerusalem as a test of people’s obedience to the Bible.⁹¹⁴ As with other prophecies previously cited, whether this particular text is intended to be interpreted in such a way is debatable since the next verse goes on to warn that God will strike every horse with panic and every rider with madness. Most dispensational commentators, however, understand this prophecy to be describing a future siege of Jerusalem preceding the battle of Armageddon.⁹¹⁵

5.3 Jerusalem Assessed

For dispensationalists especially, Jerusalem appears as non-negotiable to Israel as Zion is to Zionism. The New Testament, however, knows nothing of a preoccupation with a nationalistic and materialistic earthly Jerusalem, let alone Zionism as it exists today. Access to heaven no longer has anything to

⁹¹² Ibid., p262.

⁹¹³ Lindsey, Israel, op.cit., p165.

⁹¹⁴ Jarvilehto, op.cit., p58.

do with the earthly Jerusalem. Jesus had already made this clear to the woman of Samaria in John 4 when he said, 'a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.'⁹¹⁶ At his trial Jesus explained further, saying, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place' (John 18:36). The turning point for the Disciples comes with the resurrection encounters and Pentecost. Until this point they seemed to share the same understanding of the land as other 1st Century Jews. They had looked forward to God's intervention which would at last restore political sovereignty to the Jews in Israel.⁹¹⁷ This is reflected in the unfulfilled hopes of the disciples who when on the road to Emmaus unknowingly confess to Jesus, 'we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel' (Luke 24:21). This idea is also clearly still in the minds of the disciples even as Jesus is about to ascend to heaven when they ask, 'Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' (Acts 1:6). John Calvin comments, 'There are as many mistakes in this question as there are words.'⁹¹⁸ Jesus' reply indicates that he has another agenda for his disciples. 'It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:7-8). Jesus redefines the boundaries of the kingdom of God and thereby the meaning of chosenness. The expansion of the kingdom of God throughout the world requires the exile of the Apostles from the land.⁹¹⁹ They must turn their backs on Jerusalem and on their hopes of a materialistic kingdom. They are sent out into the world but never told to return. Subsequent to Pentecost, under the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles begin to use Old Covenant language concerning the Land in new

⁹¹⁵ English, op.cit., p953.

⁹¹⁶ 'Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.' (John 4:21-23)

⁹¹⁷ Colin Chapman, 'Ten questions for a theology of the land' in The Land of Promise, edited by Philip Johnston and Peter Walker (Downers Grove, Illinois, InterVarsity, 2000), p179.

⁹¹⁸ John Calvin, The Acts of the Apostles 1-13, (Edinburgh, St Andrew Press, 1965), p29.

ways. So, for example, Peter speaks of an inheritance which unlike the Land, '... can never perish, spoil or fade' (1 Peter 1:4). Paul similarly asserts, 'Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified' (Acts 20:32).

Christians are told instead to inhabit Jerusalem by faith and look forward to the appearing of a heavenly Jerusalem. 'But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven' (Hebrews 12:22-23). Similarly Paul announces, 'But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother' (Galatians 4:26). In Galatians 4, Paul is at his most explicit in criticizing the 'Jerusalem-dependency'⁹²⁰ of the legalists who were infecting the Church in Galatia. They are in slavery he insists. Quoting from Isaiah 54:1, Paul takes a promise originally referring to the earthly Jerusalem and applies it to the Jerusalem above which is the home of all who believe in Jesus Christ.⁹²¹ Paul must have shocked fellow-Jews when he equates Jerusalem and its Christ-renouncing Judaism with Hagar and her slave children. As has been shown in the context of the relationship between Israel and the Church, Jewish and Gentile believers in Galatia are now the children of Abraham and Sarah. Like Isaac, they are children of the promise. By doing so, Paul nullifies any future exclusive Jewish claim to be the authentic children of Abraham, with all its covenantal privileges, apart from through faith in Jesus Christ. J.C. De Young adds:

'Gal. 4:21 ff represents, perhaps, the sharpest polemic against Jerusalem in the New Testament ... Far from being pre-occupied with hopes for a glorification of the earthly Jerusalem, Paul's thought represents a most emphatic repudiation of any eschatological hopes concerning the earthly city.'⁹²²

As Palmer Robertson also observes, by the end of the Apostolic era, the focus of God's redemptive work in the world has shifted from Jerusalem to

⁹¹⁹ Robertson, 'new-covenant', op.cit., p136.

⁹²⁰ Peter Walker, Jesus and the Holy City, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1996), p129.

⁹²¹ Ibid., p131.

⁹²² J. C. De Young, Jerusalem in the New Testament, (Amsterdam, N.V. Kampen 1961), p106, cited in Walker, op.cit., p131.

places like Antioch, Ephesus and Rome.⁹²³ There is therefore no evidence that the Apostles believed that the Jewish people still had a divine right to the Land, or that the Jewish possession of the Land would be important, let alone that Jerusalem would remain a central aspect of God's purposes for the world. On the contrary, in the Christological logic of Paul, Jerusalem as much as the Land, has now been superseded. They have been made irrelevant in God's redemptive purposes.

The contradiction between the Jerusalem-based Christian Zionist agenda and the progressive revelation of scripture is clearly seen in the popular expectation that the Jewish Temple will be rebuilt. This is also probably the most contentious issue uniting many Christian Zionists with Orthodox Jews.

6. The Temple: Rebuilding for Desecration

Many Christian Zionists today believe passionately that another Jewish Temple is not only mandated in scripture but that its rebuilding is imminent. Therefore they actively support those committed to achieving it. After considering the importance of the Temple within Christian Zionism, the biblical basis of their claims, together with its theological purpose, will be explored, followed by an examination of the practical issues associated with its rebuilding.

6.1 The Importance of the Temple to Christian Zionists

For the past 19 centuries, religious Jews have prayed three times a day, 'May it be Thy will that the Temple be speedily rebuilt in our days.'⁹²⁴ Randall Price claims that the Torah 'obligates the Jewish nation to rebuild the Temple whenever it becomes possible to do so (Ex 25:8).'⁹²⁵ However, in August 1967, when IDF Chaplain Rabbi Shlomo Goren blew the shofar and performed a religious ceremony near the Dome of the Rock just days after its capture, he was criticised by both the secular Israeli press and Orthodox

⁹²³ Robertson, 'new-covenant' op.cit., p138.

⁹²⁴ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p156.

⁹²⁵ Randall Price, 'Time for a Temple? Jewish Plans to Rebuild the Temple.' Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, <http://www.foigm.org/img/timtemp.htm>

Jews.⁹²⁶ Some 20 years later Time magazine reported the findings of a survey undertaken in 1989 which showed that 18% of Israelis thought it was time to rebuild the Temple.⁹²⁷ A similar Gallup poll conducted just seven years later in 1996, to assess opinion on Israeli sovereignty over the Temple Mount, found that 58% of Israelis now supported the Temple Mount Faithful and the rebuilding the Jewish Temple. On the assumption that Arab Israelis would have opposed such a plan, the proportion of Jewish Israelis in favour must therefore have been significantly higher. Indeed, this was allegedly the largest show of support any organisation has ever received in Israel on any subject. Significantly, the highest percentage of support came from young Israelis.⁹²⁸

Contemporary Christian Zionists who have written on the rebuilding of a Jewish Temple include Thomas Ice and Randall Price,⁹²⁹ Grant Jeffrey,⁹³⁰ Hal Lindsey,⁹³¹ Tim LaHaye⁹³² and Dave Hunt.⁹³³ Their combined published book sales exceed 100 million and are available in more than 50 languages. Their views are therefore not marginal or obscure, indeed, Grace Halsell speculates that 10% of Americans support this movement.⁹³⁴ Other Christian Zionist leaders, including James DeLoach, Terry Risenhoover and Doug Kreiger, have been influential in gathering significant American financial and

⁹²⁶ John F. Walvoord, 'Will Israel Build a Temple in Jerusalem?' Bibliotheca Sacra, 125, April (1968), p106.

⁹²⁷ Richard N. Ostling, 'Time for a New Temple?' Time, 16 October, (1989), p64.

⁹²⁸ Randall Price, The Coming Last Days Temple, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1999), p26; A simple Internet search of the words 'Temple Mount' reveal 351,000 web pages using <http://www.google.com> (1st July 2001).

⁹²⁹ Thomas Ice & Randall Price, Ready to Rebuild, The Imminent Plan to Rebuild the Last Days Temple, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1992); Randall Price, Jerusalem in Prophecy, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1998); The Coming Last Days Temple, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1999).

⁹³⁰ Grant Jeffrey, Armageddon, Appointment with Destiny, (Toronto, Frontier Research Publications, 1988); Messiah, War in the Middle East & Road to Armageddon, (Toronto, Frontier Research Publications, 1991); Heaven The Mystery of Angels, (Toronto, Frontier Research Publications, 1996)

⁹³¹ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., pp153-167.

⁹³² Tim LaHaye & Jerry B. Jenkins, Apollyon: The Destroyer Is Unleashed, (Wheaton, Tyndale, 1999).

⁹³³ Dave Hunt, The Cup of Trembling. Jerusalem in Bible Prophecy, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1995).

⁹³⁴ Grace Halsell, 'Militant Fundamentalists Plot Destruction of Al Aqsa Mosque' Lexington Area Muslim Network, <http://www.leb.net>

political support for extreme Jewish organisations such as Gush Emunim and the Temple Mount Faithful.⁹³⁵

Hal Lindsey claims the Temple Mount is 'the most disputed 35 acres on the Planet,'⁹³⁶ and the single most important key to prophecies yet to be fulfilled. He writes, 'I know this sounds crazy, but I believe the fate of the world will be determined by an ancient feud over 35 acres of land.'⁹³⁷ Lindsey is emphatic:

'Obstacle or no obstacle, it is certain that the Temple will be rebuilt. Prophecy demands it ... With the Jewish nation reborn in the land of Palestine, ancient Jerusalem once again under total Jewish control for the first time in 2600 years, and talk of rebuilding the great Temple, the most important sign of Jesus Christ's soon coming is before us ... It is like the key piece of a jigsaw puzzle being found ... For all those who trust in Jesus Christ, it is a time of electrifying excitement.'⁹³⁸

He reminisces that 25 years ago the idea 'seemed quaint - even far fetched. Today, nobody's laughing about the notion.'⁹³⁹ Jews for Jesus also endorse and sell Ready to Rebuild: The Imminent Plan to Rebuild the Last Days Temple, by Thomas Ice and Randall Price, who advocate the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple next to, if not in place of, the Dome of the Rock.⁹⁴⁰ Jews for Jesus speculate, 'Something is happening in Israel! For many years there has been speculation as to whether the Second Temple, destroyed in 70 AD, will ever be rebuilt - even though scripture predicts it. Now you can read the startling evidence. The move is already underway ... Israel is ready to rebuild.'⁹⁴¹ John Walvoord, Chancellor of Dallas Theological Seminary, who wrote the foreword claims it is, 'A masterpiece presenting ... substantiating evidence ... a solid basis for faith and what can actually be expected in regard to the rebuilding of the Temple ... (it) is highly recommended.'⁹⁴² Christian and Jewish Zionists are united in the conviction that the Muslim Dome of the Rock

⁹³⁵ Grace Halsell, Forcing God's Hand, (Washington, Crossroads International, 1999), pp63-73.

⁹³⁶ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p156.

⁹³⁷ Hal Lindsey, 'World's fate hangs on 35 acres' <http://www.FreeRepublic.com> 21 February (2001).

⁹³⁸ Lindsey, Late, op.cit., pp56-58.

⁹³⁹ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p156.

⁹⁴⁰ Ice & Price, Ready, op.cit.

⁹⁴¹ Jews for Jesus review of Ready to Rebuild by Thomas Ice and Randall Price <http://www.store.jewsforjesus.org/books/products/bk154.htm>

⁹⁴² Ibid.

must be destroyed; the third Jewish Temple will be built; priests consecrated; and sacrifices reinstituted in fulfilment of biblical prophecy and to hasten the coming of Messiah.⁹⁴³

6.2 The Origins of Christian Support for the Temple Movement

The necessity of having a rebuilt Temple to desecrate is a logical conclusion if a literal and futurist reading of passages, such as Daniel 9 and Matthew 24, is accepted. However, it is rare to find such an expectation in Christian writings prior to the 20th Century.⁹⁴⁴ Indeed this contradicts the stance taken by the Early Church, for which the Temple had ceased to hold any significance.⁹⁴⁵

When the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was built opposite the then derelict site of the Temple, it was deliberately designed to parallel the layout of Herod's Temple.⁹⁴⁶ In Eusebius' Life of Constantine, he explains the symbolism of the church's design: 'Over the true memorial of salvation was built the New Jerusalem, facing the far-famed Jerusalem of old time,'⁹⁴⁷ suggesting the new basilica had replaced the Temple both symbolically and actually.⁹⁴⁸ Thomas Ice and Randall Price claim, 'By placing the church directly opposite and facing the Temple, and in fact on higher ground overlooking the Temple, Christians dramatically emphasized the claim of Christ in John 2:19 that He would destroy the Temple.'⁹⁴⁹ During the Byzantine era, other churches were built and enhanced in Jerusalem but the

⁹⁴³ Ice & Price, Ready, op.cit.

⁹⁴⁴ In his 732 page analysis of the future Jewish Temple, Randall Price lists over 40 books written in the last 30 years but only two written in the 19th Century. See also B.W. Newton, 'The Renewal of the Near East' in B.W. Newton and Dr S.P. Tregelles, Teachers of the Faith and the Future, edited by George H. Fromow, (Taunton, Phoenix Press, n.d.), pp121-127; W.E. Blackstone, Jesus is Coming, (London, Fleming H. Revell, 1916), p191; G. H. Pember, The Great Prophecies of the Centuries Concerning Israel and the Gentiles, Fifth Edition, (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1902). George Pember apparently dominated prophetic study in Britain during the Victorian era and was regarded by G.H. Lang as 'pre-eminently a teacher of teachers and one of the best exponents of prophetic scripture.' Price, Coming, op.cit.

⁹⁴⁵ While Irenaeus, Hippolytus and Origen believed a literal Temple would be rebuilt, in the Epistle of Barnabas and writings of Chrysostom and Jerome the Church itself was seen as the Temple described in 2 Thessalonians. Cited in T.L. Frazier, A Second Look at the Second Coming, (Ben Lomond, California, Conciliar Press, 1999), pp141-142.

⁹⁴⁶ Egeria's Travels in the Holy Land, translated by John Wilkinson, (Jerusalem, Ariel, 1981), p167.

⁹⁴⁷ Ibid., p167.

⁹⁴⁸ Ice & Price, Ready, op.cit., p33.

⁹⁴⁹ Ibid., p34.

area of the Temple was deliberately left desolate. Accounts of pilgrims describe wild animals prowling among the ruins. By the 7th Century reign of Emperor Heraclius, the Temple area had begun to be used as a rubbish tip, hence the naming of the Dung Gate which dates from about this time. The Muthir al-Ghiram, for example, reports of Muslims in Jerusalem who describe how local Christians offended the Jews by turning the site into a giant dung heap.⁹⁵⁰ The conviction that the Jewish Temple would never be rebuilt remained uncontested until the rise of Premillennialism in the early 19th Century. Since then, belief in the imminent rebuilding of a Jewish Temple has gradually grown in popularity. The Temple Mount now lies at the heart of the controversy concerning the Jewish claim to exclusive sovereignty over the Old City of Jerusalem.⁹⁵¹

Scofield was probably the first and most influential writer to popularise the idea of the necessity for rebuilding the Jewish Temple. In his Bible notes, Scofield taught that it was God's intention, having restored the nation of Israel to Palestine, to build two more Temples and reinstitute the priesthood and sacrificial system: 'In a sense all the Temples (i.e. Solomon's; Ezra's; Herod's; that which will be used by the unbelieving Jews under the covenant with the Beast [Dan. 9:27; Mt. 24:15; 2 Thes. 2:3,4]; and Ezekiel's future kingdom Temple [Ezk. 40-47.], are treated as one house - the "house of the Lord."⁹⁵² Scofield would probably, however, have been appalled to think Christians would ever want to support the building of another Jewish Temple since, in his opinion, it would be associated with satanic worship.

6.3 The Biblical Basis for the Rebuilding of the Jewish Temple

Soon after the capture of the Temple Mount in 1967, John Walvoord was already speculating when the Temple would be built. In an article published by Dallas Theological Seminary in Bibliotheca Sacra, he summarises the position of dispensationalists who take the authors of the Bible 'to mean what they say':

⁹⁵⁰ G. Le Strange, Palestine Under the Moslems, (Beirut, Khayats, [1890] 1965), p139, cited in Ice & Price, op.cit., p36.

⁹⁵¹ Brickner, Future, op.cit., p90.

⁹⁵² Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., fn. 2, p963.

‘Orthodox Jews for many years have been praying daily for the rebuilding of the Temple. In this expectation, they have had the support of premillennarians who interpret Scriptural prophecies as meaning what they say when they refer to a future Temple in Jerusalem. The world as a whole, as well as the majority of the church, have tended to ignore this expectation as being too literal an interpretation of prophecy.’⁹⁵³

The conviction that the Temple must be rebuilt is based on the assumption that certain Old Testament prophecies referring to the Temple have not yet been fulfilled and upon a few New Testament references which, when read using a futurist literal hermeneutic, imply the existence of a Jewish Temple immediately prior to the return of Christ.

6.3.1 Unfulfilled Old Testament Prophecies

One of the most frequently quoted Old Testament passages concerning the Temple is Daniel 9:24-27. The sanctuary is destroyed in verse 26 yet sacrifices are only brought to an end when the ‘abomination that causes desolation’ desecrates the Temple in verse 27. On the basis of a literal chronology in which it is necessary to place a gap of nearly 2000 years between the two verses, Lindsey confidently argues:

‘This prophecy speaks of sacrifice and offerings which demand that the Jews rebuild the Temple for the third time upon its original site. At that point, Judaism and Islam will be placed on an inevitable course of war over the site, a war that will start Armageddon ... any move toward that direction is a crucial clue to what hour it is on God’s prophetic timetable.’⁹⁵⁴

David Brickner reaches the same conclusion. Based on a futurist reading he deduces that the Temple must have been rebuilt, for ‘Daniel tells us this ruler puts an end to sacrifice and sets up some kind of abomination (a loathsome horror that would be anathema to Jewish worship) right inside the Temple in Jerusalem.’⁹⁵⁵ As has already been shown, there is nothing in the text of Daniel 9 that requires a futurist reading; suggests a gap between the 69th and 70th weeks, or predicts the rebuilding of a Jewish Temple.

The other important Old Testament passage used to support the rebuilding of the Temple is Ezekiel 43. Moishe Rosen believes, ‘In a vision of

⁹⁵³ John F. Walvoord, ‘Will Israel Build a Temple in Jerusalem?’ *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 125 April (1968), p100.

⁹⁵⁴ Lindsey, *Israel*, op.cit., p23.

the future Temple, Ezekiel received this word ... some way, somehow, the Temple will be rebuilt, in spite of the fact that two Arab shrines now stand on the only site on earth where this Temple may stand.⁹⁵⁶ Such an interpretation is only possible by imposing dispensational presuppositions and a futurist hermeneutic upon the text. The same futurist assumptions are used in the interpretation of references to the imminent destruction of the Temple in the New Testament.

6.3.2 Unfulfilled New Testament Prophecies

The most important New Testament passage used to support the belief in the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple is Matthew 24. While dispensationalists agree that in the first two verses Jesus is warning of the imminent destruction of Jerusalem,⁹⁵⁷ they claim that by verse 15 Jesus is describing the desecration of another future Temple which has yet to be built. This futurist interpretation of Matthew 24, like that of Daniel 9:24-27 requires a gap of some 2000 years between these verses. So, for example, John Walvoord argues that it could not refer to 70 AD since it appears to describe an event immediately preceding the return of Christ. 'The abomination of desolation has reference to a future event paralleling to some extent "the abomination that maketh desolate" of Daniel 11:31.'⁹⁵⁸ Hal Lindsey takes a similar if rather more dogmatic view:

'Of course, for Temple rites to be stopped in the last days, we know they must be restarted. The words of Jesus Himself in Matthew 24:15 require that a new holy place be built and a complete sacrificial system re-instituted. And since only a consecrated Temple can be defiled, this prophecy shows that the physical Temple must not only be rebuilt, but a functioning priesthood must begin practising once again.'⁹⁵⁹

While Lindsey and Walvoord believe Jesus was predicting a future desecration of a rebuilt Temple, non-dispensationalist commentators observe that within a generation of Jesus' prediction, Josephus was recording how Jewish Zealots desecrated the Temple, using it as a fortress against the

⁹⁵⁵ Brickner, *Future*, op.cit., p18.

⁹⁵⁶ Rosen., *Overture*, op.cit., p114. See also p166. For a critique of this view see John B. Taylor, *Ezekiel, An Introduction and Commentary*, (Leicester, IVP, 1969), pp250-254.

⁹⁵⁷ Walvoord, 'Will', op.cit., p103.

⁹⁵⁸ Ibid., p103.

Romans.⁹⁶⁰

6.3.3 The First Century Fulfilment

Eusebius, the 4th Century church historian, refers to the eyewitness accounts of Josephus to show how these predictions were understood as having been fulfilled by 70 AD.⁹⁶¹ Writing in the Jewish Wars, Josephus links Daniel's prophecy to the desecration of the Temple and destruction of Jerusalem in 66-70 AD. 'In the very same manner Daniel also wrote concerning the Roman government, and that our country should be made desolate by them.'⁹⁶²

Josephus specifically associates the desecration of the Temple with the activities of Jewish Zealots who, between November 67 and the spring of 68 AD, used the Temple as a military fortress, executed Jewish opponents inside it and even entered the Holiest of Holies.⁹⁶³ He describes how those, 'Jews, do walk about in the midst of the holy places, at the very time when their hands are still warm with the slaughter of their own countrymen.'⁹⁶⁴ Believing God would intervene and deliver them by force, he records how the Zealots invited the Idumean army of some 20,000 troops to help defend Jerusalem from the Romans. Instead, they took advantage of the city and plundered it, 'nor did the Idumeans spare anybody ... and now the outer Temple was all of it overflowed with blood; and that day, as it came on, they saw eight thousand five hundred dead bodies there.'⁹⁶⁵ Josephus regarded the death of Ananus as the beginning of the destruction of Jerusalem,⁹⁶⁶ and it is possible that Christians saw in his murder and the appointment of apostate high priests like Phannias, the sacrilege Jesus had warned of in Matthew 24. It is known that many did escape Jerusalem and found a place of safety in the mountains of

⁹⁵⁹ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p158.

⁹⁶⁰ William Hendriksen, The Gospel of Matthew, (Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 1973), p858; Michael Green, The Message of Matthew, (Leicester, IVP, 2000), pp249-58.

⁹⁶¹ Eusebius, 'On the Predictions of Christ' Eusebius, The Ecclesiastical History and the Martyrs of Palestine, (London, SPCK, 1927), 3:5.4 p69; 3:7, pp73-4.

⁹⁶² Flavius Josephus, Jewish Antiquities, The New Complete Works of Josephus (Grand Rapids, Kregal, 1999), 10, 2.7 (276), p357.

⁹⁶³ Ibid., 4, 5.4 (343), p823.

⁹⁶⁴ Ibid., 4, 3.10 (162-163), pp813-814.

⁹⁶⁵ Ibid., 4, 5.1 (313), p821.

⁹⁶⁶ Ibid., 4, 5.2 (318), p822.

Pella on the other side of the Jordan.⁹⁶⁷ The Temple was subsequently defiled once more by the invading Roman army. Josephus describes the scene: 'And now the Romans ... brought their ensigns to the Temple and set them near to its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them, and there they did make Titus Imperator with the greatest acclamations of joy.'⁹⁶⁸ As a credible 1st Century eyewitness and historian, Josephus shows conclusively how the Temple was desecrated on numerous occasions, first by Jewish Zealots, then by the marauding Idumeans and finally by Titus and his Roman army. Whether at the hands of Jews or pagans, with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD the 'Abomination' had indeed brought desolation. John Calvin believed God, 'deserted his Temple, because it was only founded for a time, and was but a shadow, until the Jews so completely violated the whole covenant that no sanctity remained in either the Temple, the nation, or the land itself.'⁹⁶⁹

Dispensationalists ignore this historical evidence and the views of the Reformers, preferring to interpret Matthew 24, and passages such as 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 as still awaiting fulfilment. Commentators such as F.F. Bruce suggest Paul is referring to the Temple 'in a metaphorical sense,'⁹⁷⁰ or describing the Church, a view also held by several of the early Church Fathers.⁹⁷¹ While Jesus repeatedly warned of the destruction of the Temple, and was known by his critics to have done so, he never promised that it would ever be rebuilt.⁹⁷² In Hebrews, the author describes the offering of sacrifices between the death of Christ and the destruction of the Temple as an 'illustration' of, and 'copies' of, heavenly realities, a 'reminder of sins' but unable, unlike the finished work of Christ, to take sin away.⁹⁷³ Peter uses the same terminology to describe the way Christians are being made into the new

⁹⁶⁷ William L. Lane, The Gospel According to Mark, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1974), pp468-69; Hans K. LaRondelle, The Israel of God in Prophecy: Principles of Prophetic Interpretation, (Berrien Springs, Andrews University Press, 1983), pp197-98.

⁹⁶⁸ Josephus, Wars, op.cit., 6, 6.1 (316), p900.

⁹⁶⁹ John Calvin, Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Daniel, translated by Thomas Myers, 2 volumes (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1948), volume 2, p390.

⁹⁷⁰ F.F. Bruce, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Volume 45, Word Biblical Commentary, (Dallas, Word, 1990), p169.

⁹⁷¹ 'The Epistle of Barnabas', Ante-Nicene Fathers, edited by Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson (Peabody, Hendrikson, 1994), 1: 16:6-10; John Chrysostom, 'Homily 3 on 2 Thessalonians, 2:4', Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers, edited by Philip Schaff (Peabody, Hendrikson, 1994), pp332-338.

⁹⁷² John 2:19, Matthew 26:61, 27:40; Mark 14:58, 15:29.

house of God,⁹⁷⁴ in which Jesus is the 'precious cornerstone.'⁹⁷⁵ There is indeed not a single verse in the New Testament which promises that the Jewish Temple would be rebuilt or that a 2000 year 'parenthesis' should be placed between references to its desecration and destruction. Christian Zionists consistently ignore the way in which the Temple is invested with new meaning in the New Testament as a 'type' for Jesus Christ and his Church.⁹⁷⁶ Instead, they advocate a return to the very practices made redundant by the once and for all atoning work of the Son of God.

6.4 The Theological Purpose for Rebuilding the Jewish Temple

Dispensationalists disagree on the precise reason for the rebuilding of the Temple. Most believe that the intention is to reintroduce the Levitical sacrificial system but they disagree on what kind of sacrifice will be offered and its purpose. Based on his reading of Daniel 12:11, Walvoord, for example, claims, 'Judging by scriptures, this is precisely what they will do as it would be impossible to cause sacrifices to cease if they were not already in operation.'⁹⁷⁷ Scofield in his Reference Bible claims that the sacrifices mentioned in Ezekiel 43:19, will however, only be a 'memorial' offering. 'Doubtless these offerings will be memorial, looking back to the cross, as the offerings under the old covenant were anticipatory, looking forward to the cross. In neither case have animal sacrifices power to put away sin (Heb. 10.4; Rom. 3.25).'⁹⁷⁸ In fact, the verse explicitly refers to the sacrifice of a 'young bullock as a sin offering.' While Scofield compromises on the issue, the New Scofield Reference Bible goes further, undermining the hermeneutical foundation of Dispensationalism:

'The reference to sacrifices is not to be taken literally, in view of the putting away of such offerings, but is rather to be regarded as a presentation of the worship of redeemed Israel, in her own land and in the millennial Temple, using the terms with which the Jews were familiar in Ezekiel's day.'⁹⁷⁹

⁹⁷³ Hebrews 9:9, 23, 10:1-3, 11.

⁹⁷⁴ 1 Peter 2:5.

⁹⁷⁵ 1 Peter 2:7.

⁹⁷⁶ Ephesians 2:19-21.

⁹⁷⁷ Walvoord, 'Will,' op.cit., p104.

⁹⁷⁸ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., p890.

⁹⁷⁹ Schuyler English, op.cit., p864.

If this particular reference to sacrifice need not be taken literally then the whole presuppositional base of dispensationalism is seriously weakened, flawed by its own internal inconsistency.⁹⁸⁰ Following a literal reading, the sacrifice of a young bullock cannot be synonymous with a memorial offering which only consisted of grain and oil.⁹⁸¹ The immediate context for Ezekiel's vision of a rebuilt Temple is the promised return of the Jews from Babylonian exile, not some long distant eschatological event. A futurist interpretation would have been meaningless to the exiles longing to return to Israel. Furthermore, if Ezekiel were referring to some future millennial age, according to Mosaic law, Jesus Christ could not serve in such a Temple because he is not of the tribe of Levi.⁹⁸² Even if he could, it would surely be incongruous for Jesus to offer animal sacrifices when the New Testament asserts he has replaced them by the shedding of his own blood.⁹⁸³ Such an interpretation undermines the New Testament emphasis that the sacrifice of Christ was sufficient, final and complete.⁹⁸⁴ If religious Jews do indeed rebuild their Temple and reinstitute sacrifices for the atonement of sin it will simply demonstrate their rejection of the atoning work of Jesus Christ. For Christians to support them in this has been described as apostasy.⁹⁸⁵ Several commentators even equate the 'abomination of desolation' with 'the blood of swine' in Isaiah 66:3 and the Temple sacrifices which were offered after the death of Christ between 33 and 70 AD, claiming it was these that desecrated the Temple.⁹⁸⁶ Indeed, George Pember, an early dispensationalist, takes a futurist view and yet controversially applies the verse to the renewal of sacrifices in the rebuilt Temple:

'Then, in reference to the sacrifices which are again being offered, the Lord adds; - "He that killeth the ox is as the slayer of a man: he that sacrificeth the sheep as one that breaketh the neck of a dog: he that offereth an oblation, it is swine's blood: he that causeth incense to rise up as a memorial is as one that blesseth an idol." Nevertheless, the

⁹⁸⁰ Venema, op.cit., p285

⁹⁸¹ Leviticus 2:2, 9, 16.

⁹⁸² Hebrews 7:14. Venema, op.cit., p286.

⁹⁸³ DeMar, Last, op.cit., p85.

⁹⁸⁴ Hebrews 2:17; Romans 3:25.

⁹⁸⁵ Hebrews 6:4-6; 9:25-26; 10:1-3.

⁹⁸⁶ DeMar, Last, op.cit., p86; Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah. 3 volumes (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1972), volume 3, p520.

Jews, while they profess to sacrifice to Jehovah, will continue to delight in their abominations.'⁹⁸⁷

Messianic dispensationalists take a diametrically opposed viewpoint to this, insisting that the reintroduction of Temple sacrifices will be an essential and authentic aspect of future Jewish worship. Zahava Glaser, of Jews for Jesus, for example, describes how over the past 1900 years the liturgy used in the synagogue has kept the memory of the Temple alive in Jewish hearts and prayers. He therefore insists, 'when God instituted the sacrificial system, it was instituted for all time':

'What flour is to bread, the sacrificial system is to the religion revealed in the Jewish scriptures. It is not a garnish. It is not a flavoring. It is the very substance out of which the Jewish religion was constructed. We can forever design our own substitutes, but they cannot satisfy our yearnings the way God's own provision can. Though some rabbis might minimize the revealed system of worship and its requirements, can the individual Jew neglect what God says? Can there be a "proper" Judaism without a priesthood, an altar, a sacrifice and a place on earth where God meets the individual?'⁹⁸⁸

Glaser reflects the position of classical dispensationalists who hold that the Temple will be rebuilt because the Jews have a separate covenant relationship with God, apart from the Church. He therefore does not appear to see the high priesthood of Jesus as in any sense necessarily replacing or superseding the Jewish sacrificial system, but perpetuating it during the millennium.

6.5 The Temple Assessed

It has been shown that the Christian support for the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple, like the claim to Eretz Israel and Jerusalem, arises largely from a literal and futurist hermeneutic. On the basis of a few allegedly unfulfilled Old and New Testament prophecies, Christian Zionists are convinced that a Third Temple will be built in place of, or near, the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and believe that a Jewish priesthood will once again offer sacrifices. They also believe this yet-to-be-built Temple will then be desecrated by the Antichrist and replaced during the Millennium by a much larger Temple, as

⁹⁸⁷ Pember, op.cit., pp353-354.

⁹⁸⁸ Zhava Glaser, 'Today's Rituals: Reminders or Replacements' Issues., 8, 3.

described by Ezekiel. This viewpoint is incompatible with the way the New Testament describes the Temple as an illustration, a copy and shadow for the atoning work of Jesus Christ.⁹⁸⁹

Covenantalists affirm that the movement in the progressive revelation of scripture is always from the lesser to the greater. It is never reversed. The New Testament repeatedly sees such Old Testament concepts as the Temple, High Priest and sacrifice as 'types' pointing to and fulfilled in Jesus Christ.⁹⁹⁰ Typology in scripture never typifies itself, nor is it ever greater than that which it typifies.⁹⁹¹ It is argued that Christians who therefore advocate the rebuilding of the Temple are regressing back to a pre-Christian sacrificial system, superseded and annulled by the finished work of Jesus Christ.⁹⁹² The New Testament itself portrays the Temple as a temporary edifice, a shadow and type anticipating the day when God will dwell with people of all nations because of the atoning work of the true Temple, Jesus Christ.⁹⁹³

The purpose of the Temple therefore finds its ultimate significance and fulfilment not in another man-made sanctuary but in Jesus Christ and his Church.⁹⁹⁴ The writer of Hebrews assures, 'But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly' (Hebrews 12:22), and the Book of Revelation expressly says that in the future the Lord will dwell with his people without any need of a Temple.⁹⁹⁵ This is why the New Testament refuses to allow a return to the patterns of the Old Covenant. Regression to the older, shadowy forms of the Old Covenant, such as the Temple, are forbidden. This transition within the progressive flow of biblical history is explained more fully by the writer to the Hebrews. Hebrews 8:13 provides not only the hermeneutical key to challenge Christian Zionism, but also explains Paul's vehemence at the Judaizing tendencies corrupting the church in Galatia:

⁹⁸⁹ Hebrews 9:9; 9:23; 8:5.

⁹⁹⁰ John 1:14; 2:19-22; Colossians 2:9.

⁹⁹¹ John Noe, The Israel Illusion, (Fishers, Indiana, Prophecy Reformation Institute, 2000), p16.

⁹⁹² Robertson, op.cit., pp53-83, 194.

⁹⁹³ John 1:14.

⁹⁹⁴ Hebrews 9:24.

⁹⁹⁵ Revelation 21:22.

‘By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear ... The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming - not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship’ (Hebrews 8:13, 10:1).

God's children have become temples in which His shekinah glory dwells. To suggest therefore that the shekinah is to return to a single local shrine to which Jews and Christians must come to worship in Jerusalem is to regress from the reality to the shadow, to re-erect the dividing curtain of the Temple, and to commit apostasy, since it impugns the finished atoning work of Christ.⁹⁹⁶ The preoccupation, therefore, among Christian Zionists with locating the site of the Temple; with training Temple priests; with breeding red heifers; and raising funds for the Temple Treasury is at best a distraction, and at worst, a heresy.⁹⁹⁷ Christian support for the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple is, however, also invariably linked to a belief in an imminent apocalyptic war, unparalleled in human history. Christian Zionists are therefore, in the words of Don Wagner, intrinsically, ‘anxious for Armageddon.’⁹⁹⁸

7. The Future: The Eschatology of Christian Zionism

Of the three main eschatological traditions,⁹⁹⁹ as has already been shown,¹⁰⁰⁰ Christian Zionism is predominantly if not exclusively premillennial. Both broad strands, covenantal and dispensational, are inherently pessimistic about the future, prior to the return of Christ. It is the latter, however, with its separate destinies for Israel and the Church and its unique doctrine of the Rapture and Tribulation which has, especially since 1970, come to shape Christian Zionism through the Apocalyptic and Messianic Dispensationalism associated with Hal Lindsey, Tim LaHaye, Moishe Rosen and David Brickner.¹⁰⁰¹ Lindsey

⁹⁹⁶ Robertson, Israel, op.cit., p82.

⁹⁹⁷ Hebrews 10:29; Galatians 1:8-9.

⁹⁹⁸ Donald Wagner, Anxious for Armageddon, (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, Herald Press, 1995).

⁹⁹⁹ Stanley J. Grenz, The Millennial Maze, Sorting out Evangelical Options, (Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, 1992); Robert G. Clouse, ed., The Meaning of the Millennium, (Downers Grove, InterVarsity, 1977); Cornelis P. Venema, The Promise of the Future, (Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 2000), pp189-362.

¹⁰⁰⁰ See chapter 2, p18.

¹⁰⁰¹ Billy Graham, Approaching Hoofbeats, The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. (Waco, Word, 1983); Storm Warning, (Milton Keynes, Word, 1992); Grant R. Jeffrey, Armageddon:

claims, for example, that his book, The Late Great Planet Earth, 'has been instrumental all around the world in bringing tens of thousands of Jews to faith in Jesus as their Messiah. I run into them everywhere.' He even claims,

'The first Prime Minister of Israel, David Ben Gurion, was reading it shortly before he died. Since everything in his room has been kept the way it was before he died, a copy of The Late Great Planet Earth remains on his desk. A friend of mine who is one of Israel's top military commanders passed out hundreds of copies of the Hebrew translation to the Israeli Defence forces, even though he personally hasn't as yet believed in Jesus as the Messiah.'¹⁰⁰²

Gary DeMar and Peter Leithart observe that: 'If Lindsey had not intimated at dates, and used the regathering of unbelieving ethnic Israel to their land as the basis for his speculations, The Late Great Planet Earth would not have been an eschatological novelty. It was the predictions that sold the books.'¹⁰⁰³

While they suggest that many who call themselves dispensationalists are really 'Lindseyite dispensationalists', in so far as dispensational writers such as John Walvoord and Tim LaHaye share Lindsey's approach to prophecy, (and they in turn have been imitated by others such as Grant Jeffrey, Charles Dyer, Dave Hunt and Jack Van Impe), the generic term Apocalyptic Dispensationalism is a more appropriate descriptive term for what has become the prevailing genre of Dispensationalism today.

Apocalyptic Dispensationalism has grown in popularity largely because of Lindsey's unconventional approach to prophecy and those who emulated him. Crucial to this pessimistic reading of biblical prophecy is the conviction that a period of Tribulation is imminent along with the secret Rapture of the church and the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple on the Temple Mount. This will trigger the war of Armageddon in which large numbers of Jews will suffer and die. Jesus will return to rescue the remnant of believing Jews, restore the

Appointment with Destiny, (Toronto, Frontier Research, 1988); Ed Hindson, Approaching Armageddon: The World Prepares for War with God, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1997); Moishe Rosen, Overture to Armageddon, (San Bernardino, Here's Life Publishers, 1991); David Brickner, Future Hope, A Jewish Christian Look at the End of the World, (San Francisco, Purple Pomegranate, 1999).

¹⁰⁰² Lindsey, Road, op.cit., p195.

¹⁰⁰³ Gary DeMar and Peter J. Leithart, The Legacy of Hatred Continues: A response to Hal Lindsey's The Road to Holocaust, (Tyler, Texas, Institute for Christian Economics, 1989), p17.

Kingdom to Israel and rule from Jerusalem for a thousand years.¹⁰⁰⁴ An examination of Lindsey's novel prophetic style will lead to an analysis of the main features of Christian Zionist eschatology, namely: the Signs of the Times; the Rapture; the Tribulation and Armageddon; the Second Advent and Day of Judgement.

7.1 Predicting the Future: The Prophet Hal

Hal Lindsey has been largely responsible for popularising a rather controversial if widely-held approach to prophecy. Some argue that Lindsey provides a teleology, that is an interpretation of history, rather than an eschatology, which is concerned primarily with the 'last things' relating to the return of Christ and beyond.¹⁰⁰⁵ Lindsey assumes, for example, that prophecy is pre-written history; is authenticated by predictive accuracy; is written in code and needs deciphering.

7.1.1 Prophecy: Pre-Written History

Charles Ryrie first described the Bible as 'history prewritten',¹⁰⁰⁶ while Charles Dyer views the dispensations as 'providing us with a chronological map to guide us.'¹⁰⁰⁷ Derek Prince amplifies this further by claiming, 'The central theme of biblical prophecy ... revolves around the land and the people of Israel.'¹⁰⁰⁸ Lindsey has popularised this idea that biblical prophecy is essentially futuristic and predictive revealing God's future plans on earth and specifically concerning the future of Israel. So he claims, 'The center of the entire prophetic forecast is the State of Israel. Certain events in that nation's recent history prove the accuracy of the prophets. They also force us to accept the fact that the "countdown" has begun.'¹⁰⁰⁹ In The Late Great Planet Earth (1970) he asserts, 'Three millenniums of history are strewn with evidence of their prophetic marksmanship and to ignore their incredible

¹⁰⁰⁴ Lindsey, Israel, op.cit., pp20-30.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Vernard Eller, 'Theology of Promise v Theology of Hope' The Christian Century, April 10, 1968. <http://www.morningstarlawrence.com/eschatology.htm>

¹⁰⁰⁶ Charles Ryrie, The Living End, (Old Tappan, Revell, 1976), p80.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Charles Dyer, The Rise of Babylon, Signs of the End Times, (Wheaton, Illinois, Tyndale House, 1991), p189.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Prince, Last, op.cit., p54.

predictions of man's destiny and the events which are soon to affect this planet will be perhaps the greatest folly of this generation.'¹⁰¹⁰ In the introduction to There's A New World Coming (1973), Lindsey also claims, 'The information in the book you're about to read is more up-to-date than tomorrow's newspaper ... I think you will be surprised to see what kind of predictions were made almost two thousand years ago!'¹⁰¹¹ By 1980, Lindsey had become more dogmatic as to the veracity of his latest book: 'it is intended to analyze what will occur in the decade we have just entered.'¹⁰¹² In Planet Earth 2000 AD (1996), Lindsey suggests that although the world is spinning out of control '... as you will discover, everything is in order. God told us these things would happen - in advance.'¹⁰¹³ Lindsey claims the biblical prophets have simply recorded future events. So in Planet Earth, The Final Chapter (1998), Lindsey insists, 'These weapons are so new, so secret, and so deadly that few people outside of military circles even know such weapons exist. But God knew, and he told Zechariah all about them when he was given details of another, upcoming battle for Jerusalem.'¹⁰¹⁴ Lindsey does not explain how these weapons could remain secret if Zechariah wrote about them 2,400 years ago.

Following Ryrie, however, Lindsey believes 'prophecy is prewritten history.'¹⁰¹⁵ In so doing he detaches predictions concerning the future from the covenantal context within which the prophecies were originally given. Lindsey's view is at variance with the Hebrew prophets themselves who consistently stress that their intention was to call God's people back to the terms of their covenant relationship, not reveal arbitrary and otherwise hidden facts about predestined future events. Authentic biblical prophecy is always conditional rather than fatalistic. The promises and warnings are conditional upon how people respond to God's instructions. Consequently, sometimes the prophecies did not come true. For example, when Micah predicted that

¹⁰⁰⁹ Lindsey, 1980's, op.cit., p11.

¹⁰¹⁰ Lindsey, Late, op.cit., back cover.

¹⁰¹¹ Lindsey, There's, op.cit., p7.

¹⁰¹² Lindsey, 1980's, op.cit., p7.

¹⁰¹³ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p2.

¹⁰¹⁴ Ibid., p227.

¹⁰¹⁵ C. Van der Waal, Hal Lindsey and Biblical Prophecy, (Neerlandia, Alberta, Canada, Inheritance Publications, 1991), p51.

Jerusalem would be 'ploughed like a field' and 'become a heap of rubble' his warnings led to repentance and revival under King Hezekiah. 'As a result, the Lord held back his judgement He had in mind' (Mic. 3:12; Jer. 26:17-19).¹⁰¹⁶ The same principle is seen in the story of Jonah.¹⁰¹⁷

It is suggested, therefore, that Lindsey has more in common with the false prophets who flattered the people with promises of peace and prosperity without specifying the covenantal preconditions of repentance and faith.¹⁰¹⁸ By treating prophecy as deterministic and 'prewritten history' Lindsey legitimatises Israel's unilateral territorial claims while ignoring the conditional nature of the covenant relationship.

7.1.2 Prophecy: Predictive Accuracy

In his first work, The Late Great Planet Earth, Lindsey surveys the apparent revival in interest in astrology, spiritualism and clairvoyancy: 'The Bible makes fantastic claims; but these claims are no more startling than those of present day astrologers, prophets and seers. Furthermore, the claims of the Bible have a greater basis in historical evidence and fact.'¹⁰¹⁹ In his third book, There's A New World Coming: A Prophetic Odyssey, written three years later, Lindsey continues to take a comparative approach to prophecy, comparing the claims of the Old Testament prophets to those of the druids of Stonehenge:

'Through these stones, 4000 years ago, priests could sight the sun, moon and stars and predict with exact accuracy the seasons, sun risings and eclipses of the sun and moon ... There have been many, throughout the centuries of man's long history, who have sought to predict the course of human events, but none have had the incredible accuracy of the ancient Hebrew prophets.'¹⁰²⁰

In 1994, looking back at the popularity of The Late Great Planet Earth, Lindsey challenges his critics, 'Not surprisingly, then, I'll confidently hold up my track record against that of any modern-day astrological charlatan or New

¹⁰¹⁶ Ibid., pp52, 53.

¹⁰¹⁷ Jonah 4:1-3, 10-11.

¹⁰¹⁸ Van der Waal, op.cit., p51.

¹⁰¹⁹ Lindsey, Late, op.cit., pp17-18.

¹⁰²⁰ Lindsey, There's, op.cit., back page.

Age clairvoyant.¹⁰²¹ Ironically, the last chapter of The Late Great Planet Earth is entitled, 'Polishing the Crystal Ball',¹⁰²² while a paragraph heading in There's a New World Coming, describing the Book of Revelation, is entitled, 'John's Chain of ESP'.¹⁰²³ In taking a comparative as well as cavalier approach to prophecy, Lindsey has been criticised for blurring the distinction between biblical and occult sources.¹⁰²⁴ This is further exacerbated by Lindsey's claim that prophecy is also veiled and needs decoding.

7.1.3 Prophecy: In Bible Code

Hal Lindsey claims to have unlocked prophetic puzzles throughout the Bible. Hidden away within these enigmas are specific predictions concerning the present and imminent future. In the wake of the 'Bible Code' debate, Lindsey rewrote There's a New World Coming (1973) and renamed it Apocalypse Code (1997) claiming to have deciphered, 'long-hidden messages about man's future and the fate of the earth'.¹⁰²⁵ 'You couldn't get a better picture of what World War III will be like without being bodily transported into the future. Hal Lindsey has done it again!' ¹⁰²⁶ Allowing for an element of media hype, Van der Waal nevertheless claims, 'In his books, Hal Lindsey uses biblical prophecy to open a supermarket in which he sells the curious inside information about the near future, especially World War III.'¹⁰²⁷ To do so, Lindsey has to perform 'acrobatic stunts',¹⁰²⁸ twisting biblical texts to fit his future scenario, propounding what some critics regard as a modern form of Christian Gnosticism,¹⁰²⁹ since only those who read his books will be able to understand prophecy. Responding to criticism that he did not foresee the collapse of Soviet Communism, Lindsey carefully denies that he himself ever claimed to be a prophet.¹⁰³⁰ He does, however, confess to making 'a series of

¹⁰²¹ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p4.

¹⁰²² Lindsey, Late, op.cit., p180. See also Demar, Last, op.cit., p197.

¹⁰²³ Lindsey, There's, op.cit., p12.

¹⁰²⁴ Van der Waal, op.cit., p51.

¹⁰²⁵ Lindsey, Apocalypse, op.cit., back cover.

¹⁰²⁶ Lindsey, Final, op.cit., back cover.

¹⁰²⁷ van der Waal, op.cit., p53.

¹⁰²⁸ Ibid., p54.

¹⁰²⁹ Ibid., p55.

¹⁰³⁰ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p191.

predictions'¹⁰³¹ and is happy to quote others who believe he is 'The Jeremiah for this generation.'¹⁰³² Lindsey's novel and controversial approach, frequently copied if rarely equalled, assumes therefore that prophecy is history pre-written, is authenticated by predictive accuracy and requires his own decoding. Such a pessimistic and determinist view of the future has certain profound implications for the Jewish people as well as for international relations in the Middle East. As will be explored in the next chapter, this futurist eschatology and the dispensational presuppositions which underpin it have been exploited to serve the interests of religious and political Zionism.

7.2 Signs of the End: Times are Changing

The rise of a literal and futurist premillennial reading of prophecy associated with the Albury and Powerscourt conferences, led to much speculation as to how contemporary events, such as wars, famines and earthquakes, proved that the end of the world was imminent. In his book, The Last Days: A Discourse on the Evil Character of These our Times Proving them to be the 'Perilous Times' of the 'Last Days' published in 1828, Irving sought to show that 'we are already entered upon the Last Days, and the ordinary life of a man will carry many of us to the end of them.'¹⁰³³ Compared to the signs highlighted by contemporary apocalyptic dispensationalists, Irving's sound rather tame.¹⁰³⁴ Irving included, 'Truce-breakers; Fierce; Despisers; Traitors; and Heady high-minded' people. Nevertheless, the degeneracy of British moral life proved to Irving that his were the last days of the 'Jewish captivity and Gentile dispensation'.¹⁰³⁵

Seventy years later, Scofield was still expounding the same bleak forecast when he spoke at the Niagara Prophetic Conference in 1897 on the 'Return of the Lord': 'The signs and portents of the end-time are now so many and so ominous that men of vision everywhere, and in every walk of life, are taking note of them; and this quite apart from the interpretation of them which

¹⁰³¹ Ibid., p4.

¹⁰³² Ibid., back cover; Final, back cover;

¹⁰³³ Edward Irving, The Last Days: A Discourse on the Evil Character of These our Times Proving them to be the 'Perilous Times' of the 'Last Days' (London, James Nisbet, 1828), p10.

¹⁰³⁴ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., pp85-138; LaHaye, Are, op.cit., pp32-43.

prophecy gives.' Looking back at previous prophecy conferences, he reminded the audience that their message had not changed. 'We have risen from our study of the Word of God to come up here year by year to utter this warning - that the age ends in disaster, in ruin, in the great, final, world - catastrophe and for this we have been branded pessimists.'¹⁰³⁶ Scofield's signs were, however, very different from those that Irving had observed. In 1908, in Jesus is Coming, Blackstone listed eight signs of Christ's 'speedy' coming. They were: The prevalence of travel and knowledge; Perilous times; Spiritualism; Apostasy; World-wide evangelism; Rich men; Israel; and significantly, Zionism.¹⁰³⁷ Referring to Daniel's prophecy, Blackstone notes that 'It is significant that this first Zionist congress assembled just 1,260 years after the capture of Jerusalem by the Mohammedans in AD 637.'¹⁰³⁸ The trauma of the First World War heightened speculation still further among dispensationalists. It also generated a good deal of cynicism regarding hopes for world peace, a pessimism that still persists today. In 1918, Scofield published, What Do The Prophets Say?¹⁰³⁹, a series of studies which included a chapter entitled, 'Does the Bible Throw Light on This War?':

'So far as the prophetic Word has spoken there is not the least warrant for the expectation that the nations engaged in the present gigantic struggle will or can make a permanent peace. It is fondly dreamed that out of all the suffering and carnage and destruction of this war will be born such a hatred of war as will bring to pass a federation of the nations - the United States of the World - in which will exist but one army, and that an international peace force, rather than an army. For once there is some correspondence between a popular dream and the prophetic Word. For that Word certainly points to a federated world - empire in the end-time of the age.'¹⁰⁴⁰

This fixation with a pessimistic interpretation of the geo-political scene also affected attitudes toward the place of the Jews within this bleak scenario. Dispensationalists like Newton, for example, took the view that the Jews

¹⁰³⁵ Irving, Last, op.cit., p10.

¹⁰³⁶ Truth (periodical), No. 19 (1897), p385. Cited in Canfield, Incredible, op.cit., p125.

¹⁰³⁷ Blackstone, Jesus, op.cit., p10.

¹⁰³⁸ Ibid., p241.

¹⁰³⁹ C. I. Scofield, What Do The Prophets Say? (Philadelphia, The Sunday School Times Co., 1918).

¹⁰⁴⁰ Ibid., pp18-19.

would be part of a European political and religious alliance in league with the Antichrist:

‘When the Papists, and the Greek church and Judaism, and Mohommedanism, and Anglicanism, shall re-echo this sentiment, and when it shall become governmentally adopted by the nations of the Roman world, we shall soon see the “Ephah” and “wickedness”, its inmate, established in the land of Shinar.’¹⁰⁴¹

To Newton, the Jews were consigned their allotted destiny in a preordained prophetic scheme:

‘There will be the Jews; some in their land, others scattered throughout the earth. Of those in the Land, “a third part” will be spared (see Zech. 12:8), and among those that are scattered, there will also be a remnant. These will be converted, and made a blessing in the earth; but the great majority of Israel, especially those in the Land, will have linked themselves with Antichrist, and will share his doom.’¹⁰⁴²

As has been shown, Newton’s prophetic speculations reflect the way in which the focus of Premillennial Dispensationalism, by the end of the 19th Century, had become more concerned with dating the ‘signs of the times’ than in proclaiming the Christian message. Gone was the passion for the lost that had fired postmillennial missionary expansion a century earlier. Those who identified more with Covenantal Premillennialism and remained committed to the established denominations, to Jewish evangelism as well as Restorationism, tended to view the same signs differently. So, for example, the London Jews Society response to the Balfour Declaration was optimistic, since it signalled the end of the ‘Times of the Gentiles’:

‘What does this all mean for us Christians? In the light of prophetic scripture we recognise that such an action on the part of our government and on the part of the Allied Powers, in being united in their resolve to reinstate the Jew in his own land, is full of significance ... Ever since AD 70 Jerusalem and Palestine have been under Gentile domination, and now we seem to be on the very verge of a literal fulfilment of the last prediction, and it is certainly a distinct warning to us that the Lord “is near, even at the very doors.”’ (St Matt. 24:32).’¹⁰⁴³

¹⁰⁴¹ B.W. Newton, Babylon, op.cit., pp145, 150. ‘Shinar’ being the earliest Hebrew name for Babylon. It is interesting that Charles Dyer a modern Dallas Seminary dispensationalist similarly regards the apocalyptic references to Babylon in the Book of Revelation to refer literally rather than figuratively to modern Iraq. See The Rise of Babylon, Signs of the End Times, (Wheaton, Illinois, Tyndale House, 1991).

¹⁰⁴² Newton, ‘Prophetic,’ op. cit., p130; also in Fromow, Teachers, op.cit., p60.

¹⁰⁴³ Jewish Missionary Intelligence, (1917), pp129-130, cited in Crombie, Love, op.cit., p160.

As has been shown, similar assertions were made in 1948 when the State of Israel was declared¹⁰⁴⁴ and again in 1967 with the capture of East Jerusalem.¹⁰⁴⁵ Some thirty-five years later Lindsey was still insisting, 'Folks, the footsteps of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, can already be heard as He approaches the doors of heaven to return.'¹⁰⁴⁶

Dwight Wilson observes how premillennial history is 'strewn with a mass of erroneous speculations which have undermined their credibility.' The supposed restoration of the Jewish people merely compounded disagreement as to whether the Jews were to be restored before or after the coming of Jesus, in faith or in unbelief. Similarly, he argues pessimistically that since: 'The restoration ... has been pinpointed to have begun in 1897, 1917, and 1948 ... It is not likely that the situation will change greatly.'¹⁰⁴⁷

While covenantal and dispensational premillennialists agree that these are the 'Last Days', they disagree, however, over what will happen next. While dispensationalists disagree among themselves as to whether a secret Rapture will remove Christians before, during or after the period known as the Tribulation, covenantalists believe the Church will remain on earth until Christ returns.

7.3 The Rapture: The Great Escape

Dispensationalism, with its distinction between God's eternal purposes for Israel and the Church, is also associated with the belief, popularised by Darby¹⁰⁴⁸ but probably originating with Irving,¹⁰⁴⁹ that there will be two stages to Christ's imminent return. First, there will be an invisible 'appearing' when Christians will be removed from the earth and meet Christ in the air, a process which came to be known as 'the Rapture of the saints.' With the

¹⁰⁴⁴ CMJ, 'The State of Israel: Why should we support it?', Always be Prepared to Give an Answer Resource, (St Albans, CMJ, 1996).

¹⁰⁴⁵ van der Hoeven, Babylon, op.cit., p151.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p160, Final, op.cit., p108.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Dwight Wilson, Armageddon Now, (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1977), pp216-218.

¹⁰⁴⁸ J. N. Darby, 'The Rapture of the Saints and the Character of the Jewish Remnant,' Collected, op.cit., Prophetic. I, II, pp.153-155.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Bass, Backgrounds, op.cit., p41; Dave MacPherson, The Unbelievable Pre-Trib Origin, (Kansas City, Heart of America Bible Society, 1973) and The Incredible Cover-Up, (Medford, Oregon, Omega Publications, 1975). See also Edward Irving, 'Signs of the Times

restraining presence of the Holy Spirit removed from the world, the Antichrist will arise, evil will prevail and unbelievers, including the Jews now restored to Israel, will suffer for seven years during the Tribulation. Satan's rule will finally be crushed by the public appearance of Jesus Christ. Concerning the Rapture, Darby argued that, 'The Church's joining Christ has nothing to do with Christ's appearing or coming to earth. Her place is elsewhere. She sits in Him already in heavenly places. She has to be brought there as to bodily presence.'¹⁰⁵⁰ This hope in a secret Rapture perhaps explains why dispensationalists are either complacent or uninterested in what will happen to the Jews during the Tribulation. Blackstone, for example, says, 'The detail of the manner of their restoration, and of their repentance and acceptance of Christ, is not so important to us. For those who are of the Church are to be taken away first, in the Rapture, and escape all these things through which Israel must pass.'¹⁰⁵¹ This is why dispensationalists are not afraid of another imminent holocaust. Whereas Israel is seen as the 'Fuse of Armageddon,'¹⁰⁵² Christians will be safely raptured to heaven just before Armageddon begins. So, in a review of End Times written by John Walvoord,¹⁰⁵³ Jews for Jesus promise, 'The end times can be happy and rewarding for Christians. The key is understanding them. With clarity, logic and conviction, this book dramatically explores world events in light of biblical prophecy, outlining the precepts of our faith. Written by one of the field's top experts, it is the definitive work on prophecy.'¹⁰⁵⁴ With increasing interest in the end of time, other dispensational writers have ventured to emulate Hal Lindsey and speculate about the Rapture and Tribulation.¹⁰⁵⁵ For example, Jews for Jesus

in the Church' Morning Watch, II, March (1830), pp156-158, cited in Paterson, op.cit., p165.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Darby, 'Rapture,' Collected, op.cit., pp153-155.

¹⁰⁵¹ Blackstone, Jesus, op.cit., p176.

¹⁰⁵² Lindsey, Late, op.cit., p44.

¹⁰⁵³ John Walvoord, End Times, Understanding Today's World Events in Biblical Prophecy, (Waco, Texas, Word, 1998).

¹⁰⁵⁴ Jews for Jesus, <http://www.store.jewsforjesus.org/books/products/BK232.htm>

¹⁰⁵⁵ John Walvoord, The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1975); The Blessed Hope and the Kingdom, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1976); The Rapture Question, revised edition (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1979); Tim LaHaye, No Fear of the Storm, Why Christians Will Escape All the Tribulation, (Sisters, Oregon, Multnomah, 1992); Marvin Rosenthal, The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church, (Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 1990); Marvin Rosenthal and Kevin Howard, Examining the Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church, (Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 1994); Finis Jennings Dake, The

advertise LaHaye's ten bestselling books in the Left Behind series:

'Thrilling end-time adventure looks at life on Earth following the Rapture. In one cataclysmic moment, millions around the globe disappear, vehicles careen out of control, loved ones vanish before your eyes, global chaos ensues. Searches for family members, for answers and truth fill your every thought. War, famines, plagues are coming-and so is the Antichrist. You'll pick it up - but not put it down!'¹⁰⁵⁶

It is for the same reason that Lindsey cautioned Christians against getting involved in the millennium celebrations planned for the 31st December 1999.

Given the state of the world, he claimed he was not planning to be around:

'I wouldn't make any long-term earthly plans. We may be caught up to meet Christ in the clouds, between now and then ... Could I be wrong? Of course. The Rapture may not occur between now and the year 2000. But never before in the history of the planet have events and conditions so coincided as to set the stage for this history-stopping event ... I want to spend the final pages of this book discussing what I expect to see happen in the hours and minutes we have left.'¹⁰⁵⁷

Passages used by dispensationalists such as 1 Thessalonians 4 actually say nothing about any secret Rapture, still less that the Church will be removed and return later to earth with Christ at His public appearing. Bass insists, 'Only by involved exegetical interpretation can the pre-Tribulation Rapture be supported.'¹⁰⁵⁸ Nevertheless with Christians removed, dispensationalists speculate on one of the more controversial aspects of their eschatology – the fate of the Jews during the Tribulation and Battle of Armageddon.

7.4 Armageddon: Jacob's Trouble

In Matthew 24 Jesus warned his hearers to flee from the impending fall of Jerusalem to the Romans. Dispensationalists take such prophecies and apply them to future events. In so doing, they have dire consequences for Jewish people today. Early dispensational descriptions of the events surrounding the Tribulation and Armageddon tend to be concise and almost clinical.¹⁰⁵⁹

Rapture and the Second Coming of Christ, (Lawrenceville, Georgia, Dake Bible Sales 1977); Salem Kirban, Countdown to Rapture, (Chattanooga, AMG, 1977).

¹⁰⁵⁶ Jews for Jesus, <http://www.store.jewsforjesus.org/books/products/sp057.htm>

¹⁰⁵⁷ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p306.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Bass, Backgrounds, op.cit., p39.

¹⁰⁵⁹ An exception to this was S.D. Baldwin who wrote Armageddon: Or the Overthrow of Romanism and Monarchy; the Existence of the United States Foretold in the Bible,

Scofield's notes, for example, describe how, 'Armageddon is the appointed place for the beginning of the great battle in which the Lord, at his coming in glory, will deliver the Jewish remnant besieged by the Gentile world-powers under the Beast and False Prophet.'¹⁰⁶⁰

Blackstone is more explicit about the suffering of the Jewish people during the Tribulation. In his immensely influential book, Jesus is Coming, Blackstone asserts, 'Surely Israel shall be restored; but there is an awful time of trouble awaiting her. Their sins are mountain high. Upon them is the guilt of innocent blood, even the precious blood of Jesus Christ.'¹⁰⁶¹ Whether intentionally or otherwise, Blackstone perpetuates the claim that Jews remain guilty of deicide, a charge that has led to much anti-Semitism. He goes on to refer to 'Jacob's trouble' mentioned in Jeremiah 30:6-7 and warns, 'It is probable that "the times of the Gentiles" are near their end, and that the nations are soon to plunge into the mighty whirl of events connected with Israel's godless gathering.'¹⁰⁶² To Blackstone therefore, while Zionism might indeed be a 'sign', it was certainly not one to be associated with. Other dispensationalists such as James Gray and Arno Gaebelein, who contributed to the Scofield Reference Bible, have also been criticised for apparently expressing anti-Semitic sentiments.¹⁰⁶³

The Jewish people fare little better in the predictions of more contemporary dispensationalists, who provide more graphic and detailed descriptions of the suffering that will take place in Israel during the Tribulation and Battle of Armageddon. Charles Ryrie, for example predicts this will be, 'the time of Israel's greatest bloodbath.'¹⁰⁶⁴ Walvoord similarly predicts a holocaust in which at least 750 million people will perish.¹⁰⁶⁵ LaHaye warns

(Cincinnati, Applegate and Company, 1854).

¹⁰⁶⁰ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., fn. 4, pp1348-1349.

¹⁰⁶¹ Blackstone, Jesus, op.cit., p174.

¹⁰⁶² Ibid., p241.

¹⁰⁶³ Arno Gaebelein, The Conflict of the Ages, (New York, Our Hope, 1933); Timothy P. Weber, Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism, 1875-1982, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1983), p189.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Charles Ryrie, The Living End, (Old Tappan, Revell, 1976), p81. The title of chapter 8 is entitled 'A Bloodbath for Israel.'

¹⁰⁶⁵ Walvoord, Israel, op.cit., p108.

that 'Jacob's trouble', prophesied by Jeremiah 30:7, will certainly be far worse than the Spanish Inquisition ... or even the Holocaust of Adolf Hitler.'¹⁰⁶⁶

While confident that Christians will escape Armageddon and witness the events from heaven, Lindsey was initially more ambivalent concerning the fate of the Jews.¹⁰⁶⁷ In There's a New World Coming (1973), Lindsey claimed God will supernaturally deliver messianic Jews who come to believe in Jesus during the Tribulation. 'The fact that God redeems 144,000 literal Jews and ordains them His evangelists not only makes good sense but fits in with the counsel of God ... they are not Jehovah Witnesses, or Mormon elders, or some symbol of the Church; they are Jews, Jews, Jews!'¹⁰⁶⁸ In 1983, in Israel and the Last Days, Lindsey is able to reassure Jewish people that during the Tribulation, despite being at the 'vortex' of a world war involving hundreds of millions of soldiers and nuclear attack, in one of the greatest miracles of all time, 'Israel will be converted to faith in her true Messiah and then miraculously protected ... (Zechariah 12:8,9). As promised, God will strengthen the Israelis to fight with a ferocity never seen before on this earth. He will also supernaturally protect them from being annihilated.'¹⁰⁶⁹ By 1994, however, Lindsey was making a more pessimistic forecast, '... only a tiny fraction of the world's population will be left. Only a remnant will have survived. Many of the Jews would have been killed.'¹⁰⁷⁰ In The Final Battle (1995), under the heading 'It will take a miracle to save Israel - Intelligence Digest,' Lindsey claims, 'Israel is in for a very rough time. The Jewish State will be brought to the brink of destruction.'¹⁰⁷¹ In a later chapter he clarifies what this will mean:

'The land of Israel and the surrounding area will certainly be targeted for nuclear attack. Iran and all the Muslim nations around Israel have already been targeted with Israeli nukes ... All of Europe, the seat of power of the Antichrist, would surely be a nuclear battlefield, as would the United States ... Zechariah gives an unusual, detailed account of how hundreds of thousands of soldiers in the Israel battle zone will die. Their flesh will be consumed from their bones, their eyes from their sockets, and their tongues from their mouths while they stand on their

¹⁰⁶⁶ LaHaye, Are, op.cit., p146.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Lindsey, Late, op.cit., pp48, 165, 167.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Lindsey, There's, op.cit., p121.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Lindsey, Israel, op.cit., pp45-46.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p264.

¹⁰⁷¹ Lindsey, Final, op.cit., p184.

feet (Zechariah 14:12). This is exactly the sort of thing that happens from the intense radiation of a neutron type bomb.¹⁰⁷²

Lindsey claims that for a distance of 200 miles from the Valley of Jezreel near Megiddo across to the Jordan Valley then down to the Dead Sea and on to the Gulf of Aqaba, the entire valley will be filled with the debris of war and the bodies of animals and people, and above all, blood.¹⁰⁷³ He writes:

'I have travelled the entire length of this valley ... It is almost impossible to imagine the valley covered with blood five feet high! Yet that is exactly what God predicts, and He always fulfils His Word. Some have asked, "Wouldn't the blood coagulate and not flow?" Blood exposed to intense radiation doesn't coagulate ... Because of the intense radiation, blood will not coagulate. It will literally become a sea of blood five feet deep.'¹⁰⁷⁴

But Lindsey believes God's power is stronger than nuclear weapons and that he will supernaturally protect the believing Israelis so that they will survive the worst holocaust the world will ever see. It is difficult to conceive how this will be possible, biologically or ecologically, or indeed how 144,000 Jewish evangelists will have any ministry to perform in a post-nuclear holocaust world, since half the world's population will have already been annihilated. Lindsey claims that the forces unleashed will be so destructive, they will be sufficient to modify the world's climate, topography, and level every city.¹⁰⁷⁵ It is difficult to imagine anyone still alive, let alone sane enough who will want to listen, in his words, to '144,000 Hebrew Billy Grahams running round the world.'¹⁰⁷⁶

Lindsey's apocalyptic views are, however, shared by many other authors, including several associated with Jews for Jesus.¹⁰⁷⁷ Reviewing The Late Great Planet Earth their website promises, 'This book will undoubtedly help you decide where you fit in God's prophetic plan for the ages.'¹⁰⁷⁸ David Brickner's own book Future Hope depicts an identical scenario to Lindsey's.

¹⁰⁷² Ibid., pp255-7.

¹⁰⁷³ Lindsey, There's, op.cit., p215.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Lindsey, Final, op.cit., pp251-252, 284

¹⁰⁷⁵ Lindsey, Apocalypse, op.cit., p237.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Ibid., p118.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Rosen, Overture, op.cit., was inspired by the Gulf War and Saddam Hussein's rise to power. See also Brickner, Future, op.cit., Louis Goldberg, 'Haman, Hitler, and Now Hussein - Another Holocaust?' Issues, 8.1.

His literalist exegesis similarly creates dissonance between biblical texts and contemporary events, with invading armies using Bronze Age military tactics while deploying 21st Century weaponry.¹⁰⁷⁹ While encouraging Jews to return to Israel, Brickner is pessimistic about their fate. 'The good news is, as the prophet said, that Israel will be delivered in the end. The bad news is that deliverance comes at enormous cost and through great conflict.'¹⁰⁸⁰ Brickner is convinced Jerusalem will be the epicentre of the battle of Armageddon. 'There is terrible bloodshed as Jerusalem suffers horrible defeat ... half of the people in the city are destroyed or taken into captivity. The destruction and devastation are hard to imagine. The nation of Israel is battered, broken and beaten. She is nearly destroyed ... but it's not over yet.'¹⁰⁸¹ In an article entitled, 'Haman, Hitler, and Now Hussein - Another Holocaust?' Louis Goldberg, the Scholar in Residence of Jews for Jesus, describes a similarly terrifying scenario awaiting Israel, based on his literal reading of Zechariah 13-14: "So," you might ask, "with Israel once more on her ancient soil and enjoying freedom she has not known for 2,500 years, how in the world can we talk about another holocaust? How would nations and leaders ever permit such a situation ever to occur again?"¹⁰⁸² Goldberg answers with a quotation from Zechariah 13 to prove that it will, he calculates, lead to at least 2.5 million Jews dying in Israel alone. He claims the suffering of survivors will be worse than at any other time in their history. 'What horror! What destruction! How can we even talk about it? It should make every human being weep. With the ovens of Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen still warm in the minds of the Holocaust survivors, how can we even begin to imagine another carnage?'¹⁰⁸³ To corroborate his claim that Zechariah is referring to a future holocaust, Goldberg quotes from Shlomo Goren, a former senior intelligence officer who was the Coordinator of Government Operations in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district as saying, 'We are now entering the long, dark tunnel ... We

¹⁰⁷⁸ Hal Lindsey with C.C. Carson, The Late Great Planet Earth (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1979) in Issues Book Review, Issues, 3.7. <http://www.jews-for-jesus.org>

¹⁰⁷⁹ Brickner, Future, op.cit., pp71-72.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Ibid., p35.

¹⁰⁸¹ Ibid., p74.

¹⁰⁸² Louis Goldberg, 'Haman, Hitler, and Now Hussein - Another Holocaust?' Issues, 8.1.

¹⁰⁸³ Ibid.

already hear the footsteps of Messiah as we begin our dark experiences!’¹⁰⁸⁴ Brickner raises the apocalyptic temperature higher by claiming, ‘The sure word of prophecy in the scripture promises that the dawn is nearing ... Listen closely as the orchestra begins. Can you hear the themes? The piece they are playing is “The Overture to Armageddon.”’¹⁰⁸⁵ Although Rosen, Brickner and Goldberg are Jewish by birth, their writings could be construed as anti-Semitic for predicting with such certitude another holocaust, which in their own words, will be worse than anything experienced in history.

Rosen’s Overture to Armageddon, for example, begins with a ‘Warning to the Reader.’ His purpose is clear: ‘It is intended to shock the reader because the realities of life are often shocking.’¹⁰⁸⁶ Lindsey’s The Final Battle, similarly begins with these instructions, ‘Read this book. Learn from it. Pass it on to your friends. It may be the last chance some of them will ever have to avoid the horrible fate this book describes.’¹⁰⁸⁷ Messianic dispensationalists such as Rosen, Brickner and Goldberg, share with apocalyptic dispensationalists such as Lindsey and LaHaye, the conviction that a literal and futurist exposition of Old Testament prophecies will shock people into believing in Jesus, either before or during the Tribulation, knowing they themselves will escape through the Rapture. They also remain confident that those same scriptures promise that most Jews will come to faith when Jesus returns, at least among those who will survive.

It is noteworthy that some agencies such as the International Christian Embassy, while essentially dispensational in theology and believing that prophecies relating to the ingathering of the Jewish people to Israel are being fulfilled today, nevertheless disassociate themselves from the Apocalyptic Dispensationalism of Hal Lindsey and Tim LaHaye. In working closely at a political and humanitarian level with the Israeli government and Jewish agencies, their understanding of the future of Israel,

‘... does NOT include the distasteful belief that “once all the Jews in the world emigrate to Israel, two-thirds of them will die in Armegeddon (sic) and one-third convert to Christianity.” There are some who call

¹⁰⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Rosen, Overture, op.cit., p189.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Ibid., p10.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Lindsey, Final, op.cit., pxxi.

themselves Christian who subscribe to that teaching. We do not and have sought to refute it where possible.¹⁰⁸⁸

The ICEJ represents, therefore, a more optimistic, though non-evangelistic form of Political Dispensationalism. The uncharacteristic stance taken by ICEJ nevertheless highlights a tension inherent within virtually all forms of Dispensationalism. Because of its commitment to a literal futurist hermeneutic in which prophecy is prewritten history, dispensationalists predict both the persecution and salvation of the Jews.¹⁰⁸⁹ They have therefore been criticised for acquiescing over anti-Semitism since, in itself, it could be the fulfilment of the prediction concerning ‘Jacob’s trouble.’ Dwight Wilson’s research into Dispensationalism in the 1930s, for example, reveals that some premillennial writers placed part of the blame for anti-Semitism on the Jews themselves; that they were responsible for revolutions in continental Europe; and even for the Great Depression in America.

‘Pleas from Europe for assistance for Jewish refugees fell on deaf ears and “Hands Off” meant no helping hand. So in spite of being theologically more pro-Jewish than any other Christian group, the premillennarians also were apathetic - because of a residual anti-Semitism, because persecution was prophetically expected, because it would encourage immigration to Palestine, because it seemed the beginning of the Great Tribulation, and because it was a wonderful sign of the imminent blessed hope.’¹⁰⁹⁰

This explains why, for example, Blackstone and Gaebelien could appear to use anti-Semitic rhetoric while supporting evangelistic initiatives among Jews and why Lindsey, Brickner and Fruchtenbaum could envisage a bleak apocalyptic future for Israel while blessing Israel and witnessing to Jewish people. DeMar observes within such an eschatology, ‘Jews are always in jeopardy of being persecuted as long as dispensationalists push a false interpretation of prophecy that makes Jews the scapegoat for a distorted theological system.’¹⁰⁹¹ This leads inexorably to the most detrimental aspect of contemporary Dispensationalism. Aligning themselves with Jewish Zionists, they are implacably opposed to any peace deal in the Middle East. While

¹⁰⁸⁸ Kern, op.cit.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Timothy P. Weber, ‘A Reply to David Rausch’s “Fundamentalism and the Jew,”’ Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, March (1981), p70.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Wilson, op.cit., pp96-97.

¹⁰⁹¹ DeMar, Last, op.cit., p451.

books by apocalyptic dispensationalists sell in their millions, few concern themselves with issues of peace and justice, other than to warn of a counterfeit peace which the Antichrist will offer Israel.¹⁰⁹² The various strands of Dispensationalism are also united in the belief that God will judge the world on the basis of how people have treated the Jews.

7.5 Judgement Day: Choosing Sides and Blessing Israel

The return of Christ is seen by all millennial traditions as the consummation of God's purposes on earth and synonymous with the Day of Judgement. Dispensationalism, with its rigid distinction between Israel and the Church and doctrine of a secret Rapture and Tribulation, is based on a rather more complex eschatological chronology. There is a diversity of opinion as to the purpose of Christ's return as well as the basis of his judgement. Scofield, for example, having divided the world into three classes of people,¹⁰⁹³ sees the return of Jesus Christ as having a 'threefold relation: to the church, to Israel, to the nations.'¹⁰⁹⁴ He claims that after the Day of Judgement and the removal of the Church there would still be 'a world-wide Gentile conversion and participation in the blessings of the kingdom,' at least for those who survive Armageddon and are left on earth during the millennium.¹⁰⁹⁵ This is one reason why some dispensational organisations such as ICEJ regard evangelism among Jewish people as inappropriate or unnecessary within this present dispensation.

Prior to the return of Christ and during the Tribulation, Classical and Apocalyptic Dispensationalism tend to associate unbelieving Israel with the devil. Scofield, for example, teaches that the Lord will return, after the secret Rapture and removal of the saints to heaven, in order to 'deliver the Jewish remnant besieged by the Gentile world-powers under the Beast and False Prophet.'¹⁰⁹⁶ Similarly, Blackstone places unbelieving Israel in league with the

¹⁰⁹² See for example, Dave Hunt, Global Peace and the Rise of Antichrist, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1990).

¹⁰⁹³ Scofield, Scofield, op.cit., p1221.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Ibid., p1148.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Ibid., p1148.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Ibid., fn. 4, pp1348-1349.

Antichrist, 'who will be received by the Jews.'¹⁰⁹⁷ Lindsey also claims they will make a peace pact with the Antichrist,¹⁰⁹⁸ and a 'treaty with Hell'¹⁰⁹⁹ while LaHaye has Israel sign 'a deal with the devil.'¹¹⁰⁰ Messianic and political dispensationalists, however, while disagreeing profoundly with each other as to whether Jews need to hear the gospel, nevertheless share a greater affinity with the Jewish people and place unbelieving Israel on God's side against the Antichrist and the Gentile nations. For example, van der Hoeven of the ICEJ, claims virtually the whole world will be against Israel:

'Nations will increasingly shut Israel out of their councils until they finally find themselves coming up against her at Armageddon (Zech. 14:2-3). Disaster will surely strike every nation that turns against Zion (Isa. 60:12) ... Repeatedly the Bible states that the betrayal of Israel will be a major reason for the wrath of God being heaped upon the nations in the latter days.'¹¹⁰¹

Brickner warns those who are 'against' Israel: 'Those who oppose the Messiah, who have aligned themselves with the Antichrist and against Israel, will be judged and delivered into "the abyss."¹¹⁰² DeHaan also insists, 'Because it is God's Holy Land, anyone who tampers with it and seeks to separate its people from their possession comes under the judgement of God.'¹¹⁰³ Derek Prince goes further, insisting, 'When God comes to judge the nations, he will judge them on their response to the regathering of Israel. At that time, no nation will be able to plead ignorance of Israel's regathering, or of the fact that it represents the fulfilment of God's prophetic word.'¹¹⁰⁴ DeHaan looks forward to the Millennium but even here makes attitudes to Israel the basis for world peace. 'When the nation of that land to whom God has promised it by covenant is given full and free possession of the land, only

¹⁰⁹⁷ Blackstone, Jesus, op.cit., p108.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p254.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Lindsey, Late, op.cit., p151.

¹¹⁰⁰ LaHaye, Are, op.cit., p159.

¹¹⁰¹ Jan Willem van der Hoeven, 'A Christian Response to Israel', pamphlet quoted in Don Wagner, Anxious for Armageddon, (Scottsdale, Herald Press, 1995), p102.

¹¹⁰² Brickner, Future, op.cit., p108.

¹¹⁰³ M. R. DeHaan, Daniel the Prophet, 35 Simple Studies in the Book of Daniel, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1947).

¹¹⁰⁴ Prince, Last, op.cit., p118.

then will the nations be at rest and the peace for which men strive shall finally be realised.¹¹⁰⁵

The implication is clear; while the historic churches, including covenantalists, believe that the judgement will be based on how people have responded to the claims of Jesus Christ, dispensationalists, whether implicitly or explicitly, appear to make Israel the decisive factor. How people and nations have responded to Israel's territorial claims and whether they have assisted or resisted Jewish emigration to Palestine will determine, in whole or in part, their eternal destiny. This deduction logically follows from the premise that Israel enjoys a separate and superior covenant, purpose and destiny on earth to the Church; they remain God's chosen people; are returning to their own land for ever through divine intervention; and the promise made to Abraham concerning those who blessed and cursed him now applies to his physical descendants. The distinction between Israel and the Church and the literalist hermeneutic upon which it is based, inexorably leads to a reductionist eschatology in which Jesus is devalued, salvation and judgement redefined, and Israel sacralized.¹¹⁰⁶ Indeed, it could be argued that if Israel is actually the measure for, and mediator of, ultimate justice and peace, then 'blessing' Israel has, for some Christian Zionists at least, become synonymous with believing in Jesus.

7.6 The Future Assessed

Christian Zionism is inherently pessimistic concerning future world events due to its premillennial presuppositions and the influence of dispensational eschatology. A speculative and futurist interpretation of ancient prophecies has led many to believe the restoration of Jews and the founding of the State of Israel are signs of the Last Times. From its roots within Classical Dispensationalism, contemporary Apocalyptic Dispensationalism, in particular, contrasts the blessed hope of Christians with the fate of Jews during the last seven years before the return of Christ. While Christians will escape, Jews will suffer. Grace Halsell observes:

¹¹⁰⁵ DeHaan, op.cit.

¹¹⁰⁶ MECC, What, op.cit., preface.

‘Convinced that a nuclear Armageddon is an inevitable event within the divine scheme of things, many evangelical dispensationalists have committed themselves to a course for Israel that, by their own admission, will lead directly to a holocaust indescribably more savage and widespread than any vision of carnage that could have generated in Adolf Hitler’s criminal mind.’¹¹⁰⁷

Such a fatalistic view of the future, seen as a prewritten script, will inevitably be predisposed to acquiesce in the face of anti-Semitism since this fulfils the prediction of ‘Jacob’s trouble.’ Furthermore, because Christian Zionism is instinctively suspicious and pessimistic about anything international, ecumenical, involving the European Community or United Nations, efforts to achieve a lasting peace in the Middle East are spurned as counterfeit and a Satanic ploy to beguile Israel. The departure from the historic Christian faith is most clearly evident in the reductionist belief that God will judge the world on the basis of how individuals and nations have blessed or cursed Israel.

8. The Distinctive Theology of Christian Zionism: Conclusions

This chapter has examined seven basic theological tenets which are accepted, in varying degrees, by evangelical Christian Zionists.

6. A literalist hermeneutic and futurist reading of prophecy is the foundation upon which the other six tenets are based. However, it has been argued that this method of interpretation is no more consistent or free of presuppositional influence as any other, and is at times inconsistent, contradictory and arbitrary.
7. A belief that the Jews remain God’s chosen people, and separate from the Church, flows from this literalist hermeneutic. While covenantal and dispensational Christian Zionists view the relationship between the Church and Israel somewhat differently, the consequences of both are essentially the same: Israel is elevated to a status above the Church; for dispensationalists at least, Israel will replace the Church on earth; while Christians, and indeed whole nations, will be blessed through their association with, and support of, Israel. This view is entirely at variance with the New Testament which universalises the concept of

¹¹⁰⁷ Halsell, Prophecy, op.cit., p195; See also DeMar & Leithart, Legacy, op.cit., p26.

the people of God and makes chosenness conditional on faith in Jesus Christ.

8. Belief in a final restoration of the Jews to Zion is also based on a literal and futurist reading of selective Old Testament prophecies. However, the texts themselves indicate that such a return occurred under Ezra and Nehemiah and that no further return is to be anticipated. It may be argued that Jesus repudiated any such expectation. New Testament writers spiritualise such Old Testament promises and apply them to both believing Jews and Gentiles.
9. It is also an article of faith that Eretz or greater Israel extending from the River of Egypt to the Euphrates is the Jewish inheritance originally promised to Abraham unconditionally and his descendants forever. The progressive revelation of scripture actually shows that such promises were actually conditional and, from a New Testament perspective, have been universalised to embrace the entire cosmos.
10. Jerusalem or Zion lies at the heart of Christian Zionism. The city is seen as the eternal, undivided and exclusive Jewish capital. Nothing in the New Testament, however, substantiates this claim. Instead Christians are called to break with any dependency upon an earthly city and by faith to recognise that they are already citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem.
11. Most controversially, many believe the Temple must be rebuilt and sacrifices re-instituted in order that it can be desecrated by the anti-Christ before Jesus returns. The New Testament is emphatic that after the death of Christ, the Temple, priestly caste and sacrificial system became obsolete and their perpetuation apostate.
12. For virtually all Christian Zionists, the immediate future is intrinsically pessimistic. The Battle of Armageddon will, they claim, lead to the death of two-thirds of the Jewish people before Christ returns to save a remnant. He will judge the world on the basis of how the nations have treated the Jews. The next chapter will show that such fatalism has profound consequences for international diplomacy.

There are three inherent problems with Christian Zionism's distinctive theology. The promises of blessing made to the Jewish people are invariably detached from their covenantal context; the interpretation of those promises by Jesus and the New Testament writers is generally ignored; and the State of Israel is sacralised, the consummation of God's purposes on earth rather than the atoning work of Christ and his redeemed Church.

8.1 Promises of Blessing are Isolated from their Covenantal Context

Christian Zionists detach the promises and warnings made to the Jewish people from their covenantal basis as well as their immediate historical context imposing an artificial futurist interpretation. Such a view is at variance with the way in which the Hebrew prophets consistently stress their intention to call their contemporaries back to the terms of their covenantal relationship with God, not to reveal arbitrary and otherwise hidden facts about predestined future events thousands of years later. The truly prophetic element of the Hebrew Scriptures yearns for fidelity. God's message to his people is always two-edged, promising blessing but also warning of judgement. It was the false prophets who flattered the people with promises of peace and prosperity without specifying the covenantal preconditions of repentance and faith. The future, in biblical terms, is thereby in some sense conditional upon faith and obedience to God's revealed will.

8.2 The Interpretation of Scripture by Jesus and the Apostles is Ignored

Their selective and dualistic hermeneutic leads Christian Zionists to ignore how Jesus and the Apostles reinterpreted the Old Testament.¹¹⁰⁸ It is instead made to speak dogmatically about present and future events with little or no reference to the way in which concepts such as land, city and Temple are redefined in the New Testament.¹¹⁰⁹ The implicit assumption is that the Old and New Testaments continue, in some sense parallel to each other into the future, the former speaking of God's purposes for Israel and the latter of the Church. This is not consistent with the way the New Testament interprets,

¹¹⁰⁸ See Galatians 4 where the Gentiles are now regarded as the children of Sarah and the Jews who have rejected Jesus are seen as the children of Hagar.

¹¹⁰⁹ Richard Kyle, The Last Days are Here Again, (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1998), p199.

fulfils, completes and at times annuls the Old. Under the Old Covenant, revelation from God came often in shadow, image, form and prophecy. In the New Covenant that progressive revelation finds its consummation in reality, substance and fulfilment in Jesus Christ and his Church.¹¹¹⁰

8.3 The Sacralising of Zionism Ultimately Subordinates the Cross

Set within the context of the wider Fundamentalist movement, the distinctive eschatological focus of Christian Zionism is placed upon a restored Jewish kingdom rather than the Body of Christ and upon the contemporary State of Israel rather than the cross of Christ.¹¹¹¹ In the atoning death of Christ, the Temple with its sacrificial system was made obsolete.¹¹¹² The destruction of the Temple in 70 AD fulfilled this judgement. To suggest therefore that the Temple must be rebuilt and sacrifices reintroduced in a restored Jewish kingdom centred on Jerusalem is to reverse the flow of biblical revelation and to suggest in some sense that the work of Christ was unfinished or incomplete. It may be argued that such a conclusion is implied by the writer of Hebrews who warns that to return to the shadows of the Old Covenant is apostasy for, 'to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.' (Hebrews 6:6).

Christian Zionism's particular reading of history and contemporary events, sustained by the dubious exegesis of selective biblical texts, sets Israel and the Jewish people apart from other peoples in the Middle East. In so doing, however unintentionally, it justifies the endemic racism intrinsic to Zionism, exacerbates tensions between Jews and Palestinians and undermines attempts to find a peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, all because 'The Bible tells them so.'¹¹¹³ The next chapter will examine the political consequences of this theological perspective.

¹¹¹⁰ See Hebrews 1:1-4, 8:13, 10:1.

¹¹¹¹ Bass, op.cit., p151.

¹¹¹² Hebrews 8:13.

Chapter 4: The Political Implications of Christian Zionism

Christian Zionism has profound and lasting political consequences. While some have analysed the political involvement of Christians sympathetic to Zionism, especially prior to 1948,¹¹¹⁴ few have examined the political activities of contemporary Christian Zionism.¹¹¹⁵

This chapter will examine six ways in which Christian Zionism has been translated into political action: blessing Israel; facilitating Jewish emigration; supporting the settlement programme; lobbying for international recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel; funding the rebuilding of the Temple; and opposing the peace process, exacerbating relations with the Arab world and hastening Armageddon. Figure 1 illustrates the correlation between the distinctive doctrines and political activities of Christian Zionism.

Doctrine	Practice
Chosen People	Standing with Israel
Restorationism	Facilitating the Aliyah Programme
Eretz Israel	Supporting West Bank Settlements
Jerusalem	Lobbying for International Recognition
Temple	Funding the Rebuilding of the Temple
The Future	Opposing Peace & Hastening Armageddon

Figure 6. The correlation between Christian Zionist doctrine and practice

¹¹¹³ Boone, op.cit. book title.

¹¹¹⁴ Barbara Tuchman, Bible and Sword, How the British came to Palestine, (New York, New York University, 1956); Regina Sharif, Non Jewish Zionism, Its Roots in Western History, (London, Zed, 1983); Paul Merkley, The Politics of Christian Zionism 1891-1948, (London, Frank Cass, 1998); Michael Prior, Zionism and the State of Israel, a Moral Inquiry, (London, Routledge, 1999);

¹¹¹⁵ Grace Halsell, Prophecy and Politics, Militant Evangelists on the Road to Nuclear War, (Westport, Connecticut, Lawrence Hill, 1986); Forcing God's Hand, Why Millions Pray for a Quick Rapture – and Destruction of Planet Earth, (Washington, Crossroads International, 1999); Rosemary Radford Ruether & Herman J. Ruether, The Wrath of Jonah, (San Francisco, Harper, 1989); Donald Wagner, Anxious for Armageddon, (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, Herald Press, 1995); Paul Merkley, Christian Attitudes towards the State of Israel, (Kingston, London, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001); Middle East Council of Churches, What is Western Fundamentalist Christian Zionism? (Limassol, Cyprus, MECC, 1988).

1. The Chosen People : Supporting Israeli Colonialism

The conviction that the Jewish people remain God's 'chosen people' in some way separate from the Church, is deeply rooted in Christian Zionism. A recent Christianity Today survey of evangelical opinion about Israel gives an indication of the strength of Christian Zionism in America. The survey revealed that 24% believe 'the biblical mandate for Christians is to support the State of Israel.'¹¹¹⁶ This is expressed in a variety of ways: defending Israel against charges of racism and apartheid; lobbying western governments on behalf of Israel; writing to the media when Israel receives adverse publicity; equating anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism;¹¹¹⁷ promoting Israeli products; hosting pro-Israeli events;¹¹¹⁸ and participating in solidarity tours to Israel. The implications of this Christian support must first of all be examined within the context of how Zionism is viewed politically in the wider world.

1.1 Zionism, Racism and Apartheid

Israel has been accused of institutional racism and apartheid by the US government,¹¹¹⁹ United Nations,¹¹²⁰ South African¹¹²¹ as well as Israeli political activists and academics.¹¹²² The word 'apartheid' is a Dutch Afrikaans

¹¹¹⁶ Cited in Prior, op.cit., p143.

¹¹¹⁷ Melanie Philips, 'Christians who hate the Jews', The Spectator, February (2002). Philips has accused the author of anti-Semitism based on quotations from this thesis published as, 'Justifying Apartheid in the Name of God' Churchman, Summer (2001), pp147-171.

¹¹¹⁸ Christian Friends of Israel and the International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem, lobby on behalf of Israel, for example, at the annual Christian Resources Exhibition at Sandown Park.

¹¹¹⁹ http://www.state.gov/http://www/global/human_rights/1999_hrp_report/israel.html (2000).

¹¹²⁰ The UN World Conference on Racism, held in Durban in August 2001, adopted the following declaration. 'For the purpose of the present Declaration and Programme of Action, the victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance are individuals or groups of individuals who are or have been negatively affected by, subjected to, or targets of these scourges... We are concerned about the plight of the Palestinian people under foreign occupation. We recognize the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self determination and to the establishment of an independent state... We recognize the right of refugees to return voluntarily to their homes and properties in dignity and safety, and urge all States to facilitate such return.' The United Nations. World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance Declaration adopted on 8 September (2001), section 1, 62 & 64.

¹¹²¹ ANC Statement: World cannot ignore the plight of the Palestinian people, 25 August 2001. http://www.badil.org/Resources/WCAR/ANC_Statement.htm

¹¹²² Jeff Halper, 'The 94 Percent Solution, A Matrix of Control Losing Ground? The

word derived from the root 'apart' meaning 'separate' and 'heid' meaning 'hood'. In the context of South Africa it was used to describe the legal and institutional segregation of inhabitants of European descent from those of non-European descent.¹¹²³ In 1973, the UN defined apartheid as, 'inhuman acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of persons over another racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them.'¹¹²⁴ As has been noted, although subsequently revoked following pressure from the US, in 1975 the UN specifically applied that definition to Israel, condemning the ethnic exclusivism of Zionism as, 'a form of racism and racial discrimination.'¹¹²⁵

The US State Department Country Reports on 'Israel and the Occupied Territories', provide an objective and accurate evaluation of the political consequences of Zionism. The 1989 report observed:

'Israel's Arab citizens have ... not shared fully in the rights granted to Jewish citizens ... The Department of State has observed that "Israel welcomes Jewish immigrants ... to whom it gives automatic citizenship and residence rights," while it denies such citizenship and residence rights to Palestinians living in refugee camps in the West Bank and in Gaza who were born in Israel, and whose very lands Israel has expropriated and holds "in trust for the Jewish people." ... The fourth basic law is Israel's status law, which gives Israel's citizens with "Jewish nationality" certain rights and privileges which are denied to Israel's citizens with "Arab nationality".'¹¹²⁶

The Report for 1999 shows how little progress had been made in the preceding decade:

'The Government made little headway in reducing institutionalized legal and societal discrimination against Israel's Christian, Muslim, and Druze citizens, who constitute just over 20 percent of the population, but do not share fully the rights provided to, and obligations imposed on, the country's Jewish citizens. As part of their efforts to address the problem,

Politics of Environment and Space' Middle East Report, 216, Fall (2000), http://www.merip.org/mer/mer216/216_halper.html

¹¹²³ The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1983).

¹¹²⁴ The UN International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (1973) <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/intlinst.htm>

¹¹²⁵ Resolution of the UN General Assembly on the report of the Third Committee (A/10320) 3379 (XXX). Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. <http://domino.un.org/unispal.nsf>

¹¹²⁶ Shaw J. Dallal, 'Israel Is Not Comparable to "Advanced Western Democracies"', Washington Report May (1990), p14, http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/7891/dallal_isrl_dmcr.html (2000).

some government officials publicly acknowledged significant discrimination against Israel's non-Jewish citizens; however, no specific steps were taken by year's end. The Government does not provide Israeli Arabs ... with the same quality of education, housing, employment, and social services as Jews.'¹¹²⁷

The implementation of apartheid in South Africa was achieved through the Population Registration Act, which defined nationality on the basis of race and thus designated what rights each race would enjoy; the Land Act which reserved 87% of the land for whites only; and the Group Areas Act which designated where different ethnic groups could live. Since 1948, successive Israeli governments have implemented very similar legislation. The Israeli Population Registry Act (in tandem with the Law of Return) defines identity on the basis of race as well as religion; the Land Act reserves all land managed by the Jewish National Fund, now extending to 93% of the State of Israel, for exclusive Jewish residence while denying similar rights to Israeli Arabs.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu is not alone in drawing comparisons between South Africa and Israel. He has been outspoken in condemning the conditions under which Palestinians live, claiming they are worse than that which Blacks endured under South African apartheid.¹¹²⁸

'I have been very deeply distressed in all my visits to the Holy Land, how so much of what was taking place there reminded me so much of what used to happen to us Blacks in Apartheid South Africa. I have seen the humiliation of the Palestinians at the road blocks and recall what used to happen to us in our motherland, when arrogant, young white police officers would hector, and bully us, and demean us when we ran the gauntlet of their unpredictable whims – whether they would let you through or not. When they seemed to derive so much fun out of our sullen humiliation. I have seen such scenes, or heard of them, being played out in the Holy Land. The rough and discourteous demands for IDs from the Palestinians were so uncannily reminiscent of the infamous pass law raids of the vicious Apartheid regime. We saw on those visits, or read about things that did not happen even in Apartheid South Africa. The demolition of homes because of a suspicion that one or other family member was a terrorist. And so, all paid a price in these acts of collective punishment. Seemingly being repeated more recently in the attacks on Arab refugee camps. We don't know the exact truth because the Israelis won't let the media in. What are they hiding? But perhaps,

¹¹²⁷ http://www.state.gov/http://www/global/human_rights/1999_hrp_report/israel.html (2000).

¹¹²⁸ Desmond Tutu, 'Ending the Occupation' unpublished paper delivered at the Friends of Sabeel North America Conference, Boston 13 April, (2002); See also in Elias Chacour, *We Belong to the Land*, (New York, Harper Collins, 1990), p177.

more seriously, why is there no outcry in this country at the censorship of their media?'¹¹²⁹

In their contribution to the UN Conference on Racism held in Durban in 2001, the ANC also made the following comparison between Israel and South Africa:

'Until its defeat, South Africa's apartheid regime found much in common with their Israeli counterparts. Both Afrikaaner nationalism, as manifest in the apartheid State, and Zionism, as manifest in the Israeli State, propagated the ideology of an exclusive "chosen people" ... Such an approach is familiar to black South Africans. It is racist.'¹¹³⁰

The Association for Civil Rights in Israel, in a report to the US Senate, has observed how racial discrimination against Israeli Arabs works:

'Some Education Ministry grants are earmarked only for army veterans, the report said, making most Arabs ineligible because they are not drafted into Israel's army. Some private employers also demand military service, the civil rights group said, citing an ice cream store that advertised for staff with an army record. "The criterion of army service is cynically used to prevent Arabs being accepted for jobs," it said.'¹¹³¹

Apart from in a few locations such as Haifa, Lod and Jaffa, most Israeli towns and villages are officially segregated. Professor Yvonne Haddad observes that Israel '... not only bans the return of Palestinian Gentiles to their homeland, but also restricts its Christian and Muslim citizens to specified living areas and limits their access to resources which are monopolized and confiscated by the State (such as education, water, and land).'¹¹³²

In 1987, the Jewish academic Uri Davis, published what is probably the most detailed and controversial work on racism in Israel, Israel, An

¹¹²⁹ Tutu, Ibid.

¹¹³⁰ 'The ANC recommits itself to ongoing solidarity with the Palestinian people and calls on the Israeli government to immediately and unconditionally end: its campaign of murder and terror against Palestinian activists and leaders; the use of live ammunition against civilians, and the deployment of military tactics and weapons of war against civilian communities; detention without trial; its ongoing gross violations of human rights, and the various forms of collective punishment it imposes on the Palestinian people; its illegal and provocative programme of settlement activities. In Israel today, the government classifies its citizens as either Jew or non-Jew. These classifications are stamped into official identity documents. Political, social and economic rights and goods are allocated on the basis of this classification. Such an approach is familiar to black South Africans. It is racist.' ANC Statement: 'World cannot ignore the plight of the Palestinian people,' 25 August (2001). http://www.badil.org/Resources/WCAR/ANC_Statement.htm

¹¹³¹ <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/7891/dscrmnt.html> (2000).

¹¹³² Yvonne Haddad, 'American Muslims and the Question of Identity', The Muslims of

Apartheid State. In it Davis exposed the inherent apartheid in the official structures of the Jewish State which has, since 1948, like South Africa, defined the national status and citizenship rights of its population on racial grounds. He shows how, for example, 90% of the State of Israel has been legally defined as land which only Jews can lease or cultivate.¹¹³³ In every aspect of Israeli society, whether in terms of educational provision, access to medical care, employment rights, or treatment under the judicial system, Arabs suffer systematic and institutional discrimination and racism. On Israeli birth certificates for Jewish children citizenship is given as 'Israeli'. In the case of Arabs this category is left blank. Arab children are thus stateless at birth, and must earn Israeli citizenship, whereas the Jewish child is born with it. Arab villages falling outside Israeli zoning plans are technically illegal and do not appear on Israeli maps, and thus cannot apply for water, electricity or telephones, etc. Since 1948, over 500 such villages have been demolished within the State of Israel. While all Israelis receive child benefit for their first child, benefit for subsequent children is dependent on the parents completing their military service. Orthodox Jews are exempted from this requirement, while Arabs are not. Consequently 99% of Jews apply, 99% of Arabs do not.

Numerous other well known Jewish figures have been critical of Israel's apartheid policies. For example, in 1991 Sir Yehudi Menuhin, was awarded the prestigious Wolf Prize by the Israeli Government. In his acceptance speech before the Israeli Knesset he referred to Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank in these terms:

'This wasteful governing by fear, by contempt for the basic dignities of life, this steady asphyxiation of a dependent people, should be the very last means to be adopted by those who themselves know too well the awful significance, the unforgettable suffering of such an existence. It is unworthy of my great people, the Jews, who have striven to abide by a code of moral rectitude for some 5,000 years, who can create and achieve a society for themselves such as we see around us but can yet deny the sharing of its great qualities and benefits to those dwelling amongst them.'¹¹³⁴

Noam Chomsky, has made similarly outspoken criticisms of the Israeli stance

America, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1991), p224.

¹¹³³ Uri Davis, Israel: An Apartheid State, (London, Zed, 1987).

in the peace process, drawing comparisons with South Africa.¹¹³⁵

'The intended goal, it appears, is to ensure Israel's control of the territories, with scattered cantons of local Palestinian administration. If these are called a "Palestinian State", the result will resemble South Africa's Bantustan policy, but not quite. The Bantustans were subsidized by South Africa, while the US-Israeli plan is to leave to the Palestinian cantons the task of dealing with the bitter effects of the military occupation, which barred any possibility of economic development.'¹¹³⁶

Jeff Halper, of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions has also described his own government's policies as fundamentally racist.

'Whether a Palestinian State actually emerges from the Oslo process or Israel's occupation becomes permanent, the essential elements of Apartheid - exclusivity, inequality, separation, control, dependency, violations of human rights and suffering -- are likely to define the relationship between Israel and the Occupied Territories/Palestine.'¹¹³⁷

Following the attack on the Jenin refugee camp in April 2002, Gerald Kaufman, described Ariel Sharon as a 'war criminal' for using 'methods of barbarism against the Palestinians.' Speaking in a Commons debate Kaufman insisted, 'It is time to remind Sharon that the Star of David belongs to all Jews and not to his repulsive government. His actions are staining the Star of David with blood.'¹¹³⁸

Although Israel aspires to be a Western democracy, respecting and protecting the rights of ethnic and religious minorities, Jewish critics especially, argue that institutionally, judicially and religiously, the State of Israel is practicing apartheid.

1.2 Standing with Israel

A CMJ resource pack produced in 1996 includes a section entitled: 'The State of Israel: Why should we support it?'¹¹³⁹ It expresses succinctly the reasons

¹¹³⁴ 'Wolf Prize winner raps government' Jerusalem Post, May 6, (1991).

¹¹³⁵ Noam Chomsky, 'The Israel-Arafat Agreement' Z Magazine, October (1993), <http://www.zmag.org/chomsky/articles/z9310-israel-arafat.html>

¹¹³⁶ Noam Chomsky, 'Israel, Lebanon and the Peace Process' Z Magazine, April (1996). <http://www.zmag.org/chomsky/other/9604-israel.html>

¹¹³⁷ Halper, op.cit.

¹¹³⁸ Ewan MacAskill & Nicholas Watt, 'Israel faces rage over 'massacre'', Guardian Unlimited, 17 April, 2002, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/israel/story/0,2763,685701,00.html>

¹¹³⁹ CMJ, Always be Prepared to Give an Answer Resource Pack (St Albans, CMJ, 1996).

Christian Zionists identify with Israel: 'In the biblical worldview one cannot ... divorce the issue of the people of Israel's relationship with God from their relationship to their delegated sovereignty in the land of Israel.' Based on the premise that God has promised to bring the Jewish people back to Palestine, CMJ argue, 'it seems to us that God is undoubtedly behind the re-creation of the Jewish State in the modern world' and therefore why Christians are 'called to support the State of Israel.'¹¹⁴⁰

Apart from the support given by the United States government, Israel has been largely isolated within the international community. Hal Lindsey laments that:

'Up to the time of the 1991 Madrid Conference, the Arabs were "called upon" to "comply", "desist", "refrain" etc. four times. Israel was "demanded", "ordered", etc. to do General Assembly bidding three hundred and five times. The UN voted six hundred and five resolutions between its inception and the Gulf War. Four hundred and twenty nine of those resolutions, or, sixty-two percent of the total of the UN's resolutions were against Israel or its interests.'¹¹⁴¹

Based on Isaiah 40, Christian Zionists see their role as obeying God's command to, 'comfort, comfort my people, says your God.' This is interpreted as standing with Israel and defending her when criticised or attacked.

In October 2000, for example, just days after Ariel Sharon's provocative visit to the Haram Al-Sharif, which it appears was deliberately timed to undermine the government of Barak for negotiating with Arafat over a shared Jerusalem,¹¹⁴² an advertisement appeared in the New York Times entitled 'Open Letter to Evangelical Christians from Jews for Jesus.' In it they called upon evangelicals to show solidarity with the State of Israel at this critical time:

¹¹⁴⁰ CMJ, 'The State of Israel: Why should we support it?' Always, op.cit.

¹¹⁴¹ Hal Lindsey, 'The UN & Israel' International Intelligence Briefing, 29th October (1998): <http://www.iib-report.com/pages/transcripts/10.29.98/oct29.htm>. Emphasis in the original.

¹¹⁴² In July 2001 the Rabbinical Council of Judea, Samaria and Gaza called on all rabbis to bring their communities to visit the Temple Mount. This was the first time that a group of rabbis representing a significant proportion of the religious Jewish community had ruled that it was permissible for Jews to ascend the Temple Mount. Previously this had been forbidden to orthodox Jews. The rabbis also called upon the Yesha Council of Jewish settlements to organise mass visits to the Temple Mount from the settlements which comprise the more right wing religious Jews. See N. Shragai, 'Rabbis call for mass visits to Temple Mount,' Ha'aretz, 19 July (2001).

‘Now is the time to stand with Israel. Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, our hearts are heavy as we watch the images of violence and bloodshed in the Middle East ... Christian friends, “The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable” (Romans 11:29). So must our support for the survival of Israel in this dark hour be irrevocable. Now is the time for Christians to stand by Israel.’¹¹⁴³

The International Christian Zionist Centre (ICZC) also expresses solidarity with Israel by organising the annual Feast of Tabernacles celebration in Jerusalem, which brings thousands of Christian Zionists to the city with the intention of blessing Israel. They claim, ‘This feast, according to the Word of God is a prophetic feast for the end-times, where all the nations of the earth are welcomed to celebrate this Feast with Israel.’¹¹⁴⁴

One of their other activities is to market and export Israeli-made products through shops and churches. Ellen Margarete van der Hoeven, for example, founded the International Media & Trade Organisation, IETC B.V. in Europe to market exclusive ‘Made in Israel products’.¹¹⁴⁵ The ICZC also channel investment into Israeli companies ‘especially in Judea and Samaria, the Golan and Gaza Strip regions.’¹¹⁴⁶ This is despite being in breach of international trade agreements which forbid Israel from exporting products from the Occupied Territories labelled ‘Israeli’. From 1990-1997 Ellen Margarete van der Hoeven was the economic attaché for the International Christian Embassy and ‘successfully fought the Arab boycott against Israel’ in cooperation with the Ministry of Trade in Israel together with the Israeli embassy in Holland.¹¹⁴⁷ The ICZC are convinced that when the world turns against Israel and financial support from the United States falls away, the Jewish State will be able to rely on the economic support of Christian friends.¹¹⁴⁸

1.3 The Israeli Lobby on Capitol Hill

Until the 1980s, US Middle East policy was largely peripheral to the wider

¹¹⁴³ ‘Open Letter to Evangelical Christians from Jews for Jesus: Now is the Time to Stand with Israel.’ *The New York Times*, 23 October (2000).

¹¹⁴⁴ International Christian Zionist Centre, ‘About Us – Israel My Beloved’ <http://www.israelmybeloved.com>

¹¹⁴⁵ Ibid., ‘About the ICZC Directors.’

¹¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

global threat posed by Soviet hegemony. The protection of Western Europe through NATO was a higher priority. The collapse of Communism, however, created a power vacuum in the Middle East which the US has filled. Following the Gulf War to liberate Kuwait and then more recently, Afghanistan from the Taleban, the US has significantly increased its influence in the Middle East. At the same time there has been a significant increase in the impact of the pro-Israeli lobby. As a consequence, the Middle East, and Israel in particular, has become central to US foreign policy, not least because of the al Qaeda attacks on New York and Washington. Dick Armey, for example, the Republican Majority Leader in the House of Representatives and a Christian Zionist, recently linked Israel's conflict with the Palestinians with the US global war on terrorism. 'Let me be clear, Israel is fighting the same war on terrorism that we are fighting.'¹¹⁴⁹ Michael Lind contends US foreign policy is skewed because of the disproportionate influence of the Israeli lobby. He summarises the ways in which the Israeli lobby has distorted US foreign policy:

'Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, enabled by US weapons and money, inflames anti-American attitudes in Arab and Muslim countries. The expansion of Israeli settlements on Palestinian land makes a mockery of the US commitment to self-determination for Kosovo, East Timor and Tibet. The US strategy of dual containment of Iraq and Iran, pleases Israel - which is most threatened by them - but violates the logic of realpolitik and alienates most of America's other allies. Beyond the region, US policy on nuclear weapons proliferation is undermined by the double standard that has led it to ignore Israel's nuclear programme while condemning those of India and Pakistan.'¹¹⁵⁰

The Christian Right came to shape US foreign policy largely through the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980. His victory over Jimmy Carter gave a considerable boost to the Christian Zionist cause. Wagner claims his election, 'ushered in not only the most pro-Israel administration in history but gave several Christian Zionists prominent political posts.' He points out that in addition to the US President, those who subscribed to a futurist premillennial theology and endorsed Christian Zionism included Attorney General Ed Meese, Secretary of Defence Casper Weinberger, and Secretary of the

¹¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁴⁹ Dick Armey, quoted in 'Republican Party Leader calls for ethnic cleansing of Palestinians on Prime Time Talk Show.' The Electronic Intifada, 3 May (2002) <http://electronicintifada.net/actionitems/020202dickarmey.html>

Interior James Watt.¹¹⁵¹ White House seminars became a regular feature of Reagan's administration bringing leading Christian Zionists like Jerry Falwell, Mike Evans and Hal Lindsey into personal contact with national and congressional leaders. In the same year, the International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem, was founded with the purpose of coordinating 'direct political lobbying activities in cooperation with the Israeli government.'¹¹⁵² One of its primary goals is to see the removal of PLO offices in Western countries and the transfer of the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.¹¹⁵³

At the February 1991 National Prayer Breakfast, Ed McAteer, a right-wing political activist and President of the Religious Roundtable, launched the Christian Israel Public Affairs Committee (CIPAC), which was modelled on the powerful American Israel Political Affairs Committee (AIPAC), which for over twenty years has lobbied on behalf of the right-wing Israeli Likud party.¹¹⁵⁴ The board of directors of CIPAC includes Tom Dine, a director of AIPAC and Herbert Zweilbon, President of Americans for a Safe Israel. The executive director of CIPAC is Richard Hellman, a former aide to Senator Howard Baker and an ICEJ activist. The goals of CIPAC were identical to AIPAC but are also motivated by dispensational Christian Zionism. One of the first objectives of CIPAC was to lobby the Congress to make \$10 billion available in US loan guarantees to fund the resettlement of Jews from the former Soviet Union in Israel and the West Bank. The Bush administration linked the loan guarantees to the halting of Jewish settlements on the West Bank. Jan Willem van der Hoeven of the ICEJ told the Jerusalem Post, the 'Christian community finds the Bush administration's policy on loan guarantees totally unacceptable.' He claimed that 80% of America's evangelical Christians supported the loan guarantees.¹¹⁵⁵

The National Unity Coalition for Israel (NUCFI) is probably the most recent network of Christian Zionists to be formed in the US yet it is already the largest and most powerful. The NUCFI was founded by Esther Levens in

¹¹⁵⁰ Michael Lind, 'The Israel Lobby', Prospect, April (2002).

¹¹⁵¹ Donald Wagner, 'Beyond Armageddon,' The Link, New York: Americans for Middle East Understanding; October-November, (1992), p5.

¹¹⁵² Wagner, Anxious., op.cit., p107.

¹¹⁵³ Ibid., p108.

¹¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p108.

Kansas in 1994 and now comprises a broad coalition of 200 different and autonomous Jewish and Christian organisations representing 40 million members who are ‘dedicated to a secure Israel.’¹¹⁵⁶ Their principal strategy is to lobby the US media and political establishment, to challenge what they term ‘disinformation and propaganda’ and to express ‘the truth about Israel.’ The NUCFI includes three of the largest Christian Zionist organisations: Bridges for Peace, the International Christian Embassy and Christians for Israel.

This coalition effectively controls both the Republican and Democratic parties by providing the bulk of campaign funding to both sides. Aluf Ben, a spokesman for Shimon Peres, was quoted in Ha’aretz as claiming ‘60 percent of all financial help to Democrats came from Jewish sources.’¹¹⁵⁷ According to the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, ‘most pro-Israel fund-raisers estimate that at least 60 to 90 percent of Democratic campaign funding comes from Jewish sources, which also supply perhaps 40 percent of Republican funding.’¹¹⁵⁸

The power of the pro-Israeli lobby, which ensures Israel continues to receive more than 3 billion dollars annually from the US in grants, loans and subsidies, can be gauged by the fact that George Bush snr. was the last US President to criticise them in public. During the Gulf War, he enraged the Israeli lobby by pressurising Israel not to retaliate against Iraqi attacks and by promising Arab coalition partners that he would deal with the Palestinian issue. In September 1991, he complained that, ‘there are 1,000 lobbyists up on the Hill today lobbying Congress for loan guarantees for Israel and I’m one lonely little guy down here asking Congress to delay its consideration of loan guarantees for 120 days.’¹¹⁵⁹ Lind points out that the pro-Israeli lobby was responsible for encouraging, ‘the greatest abuse of the Presidential pardon power in American history’ when Bill Clinton, on his last day in office, controversially pardoned Mark Rich, the fugitive billionaire on the FBI’s ‘Most

¹¹⁵⁵ Jerusalem Post, 11 October (1991), cited in Wagner, op.cit., p108.

¹¹⁵⁶ <http://www.israelunitycoalition.com>

¹¹⁵⁷ Israel Shahak, “Ability of US Jewish Groups to set Clinton Agenda Depends on Media.” Washington Report, June 1995, pp10, 94.

¹¹⁵⁸ Publisher’s Page, Washington Report, June 1995, pp122.

¹¹⁵⁹ Lind, op.cit.

Wanted' list. In a New York Times article in February 2001, Clinton explained that he had done it for Israel:

'Many present and former high-ranking Israeli officials of both major political parties and leaders of Jewish communities in America and Europe urged the pardon of Mr Rich because of his contributions and services to Israeli charitable causes, to the Mossad's efforts to rescue Jews from hostile countries, and to the peace process through sponsorship of education and health programmes in Gaza and the West Bank.'¹¹⁶⁰

The pro-Israeli lobby is also involved in the selection, appointing and firing of US government officials and appointees.¹¹⁶¹ Arabists like Andrew Killgore, for example, who gave 25 years to serving in the US Foreign Service in several Arab countries, found himself, in 1974, when he expected to be named ambassador to Bahrain, exiled to the embassy in New Zealand. 'I thought that ... I'd never get a good job [in the Arab world], because the Zionists, in my view, had it in for me at that time.'¹¹⁶² Following his retirement in 1980, Killgore went on to publish The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs which included the following criticism of the Israeli lobby: 'It is wrong and perverse for fanatical elements within the two and a half percent of our population who are Jewish to hold Congress hostage ... America must regard the Israeli progression from penetration to direction of US foreign policy as the work of a master criminal.'¹¹⁶³ With the formation of the NUCFI bringing together 200 different Christian and Jewish organisations, it is unlikely that the power of the pro-Israeli lobby will in any way be diminished in the foreseeable future.

Christian Zionists have also been influential in forging a closer relationship with Israel by facilitating solidarity pilgrimages and educational tours to the Holy Land.

1.4 Solidarity and 'Terror' Tours to Israel

Since 1967, following the capture of most of the important biblical sites associated with pilgrimages from Jordan and Syria, such as the Old City of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Bethany, the Shepherds Fields of Beit Sahour,

¹¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹¹⁶² Kaplan, op.cit., p158.

Hebron, Nablus, Sebaste, Jericho, Caesarea Philippi and Banias, Israel has systematically exploited what Shirley Eber describes as a lucrative 'touristic gold mine',¹¹⁶⁴ and made tourism a tool of propaganda.¹¹⁶⁵

Beside the powerful biblical images of Israel as the land of the 'chosen people', there are also strong political and economic incentives in portraying Israel as a land without a people for a people without a land; as the bastion of Western democracy in a tyrannical Middle East; 'a defenceless Israeli David pitted against a ruthless and tyrannical Arab Goliath.'¹¹⁶⁶ The Israeli government has largely achieved this by refusing to grant tour guide licences to Palestinians from the West Bank, while training over 3,000 Israeli guides; by freezing the expansion or renovation of Palestinian hotels in East Jerusalem while promoting Jewish hotels in West Jerusalem; and by heavily taxing Palestinian enterprises, traders and hoteliers while subsidising pro-Israeli tour agencies. Hagop Sarkissian, the Armenian Bishop in Jerusalem illustrates how this bias is affecting the Christian businesses.

'We have been here for 1600 years, yet we cannot be sure what will happen tomorrow. The Israelis claim they are the champions of religious freedom, but behind that smokescreen they make it impossible for our community to flourish. They even use the tax system to put our shop keepers out of business, charging them totally arbitrary tax demands. In 1967 we had eighty or ninety shops in the Old City, now - what? - maybe ten are left, possibly less. All the rest have been bankrupted by tax officials who refuse to believe their accounts. In some cases shopkeepers got demands for more than the entire value of their businesses.'¹¹⁶⁷

Israel's greatest success, however, has been to enlist American evangelical leaders as allies in promoting pro-Israeli solidarity tours and pilgrimages.

Shabtai Shay, head of tourism marketing at the Israeli Ministry of Tourism, having surveyed the market in the United States, identified:

'... the Southern Baptist Churches as bearing the strongest potential for traffic increases. We're concentrating our efforts in the 12 states that constitute the "Bible Belt", and we're promoting heavily and

¹¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹¹⁶⁴ Shirley Eber, 'Getting Stoned on Holiday: Tourism on the Front Line'. In Focus: Tourism Concern, 2, Autumn (1991), pp4-5.

¹¹⁶⁵ Glen Owen 'Tourists warned to avoid flashpoints.' The Times, 14 August (1997), p2.

¹¹⁶⁶ Eber, op.cit.

¹¹⁶⁷ Stephen Sizer, 'The Future of Christianity in the Holy Land,' Al Aqsa, 4.1 October (2001), p10.

intensively there. We're advertising in that region and are taking the fullest advantage possible of media which is read or viewed specifically by the Southern Baptist population. For the past two years, Pat Boone and other "high profile" figures have worked with us to promote Israel through the appropriate media.'¹¹⁶⁸

Jerry Falwell's Friendship Tour of Israel is not untypical of the kind of tour other Christian Zionist leaders organise. Taking upwards of 600 pilgrims at any one time, Falwell's itinerary has in the past included the following programme of events:

- '1. An Israeli American Friendship Banquet in Jerusalem with Dr Jerry Falwell and Prime Minister Menachem Begin.
2. Meetings with top Israeli Administration officials and Knesset Members.
3. Luncheon with Major Saad Haddad, Commander of Christian forces in Southern Lebanon.
4. Participating (particularly for pastors and other Christian laymen) in a transatlantic, live TV satellite program.
5. On-site tour of modern Israeli battlefields. (Hear military experts describe those battles and how they were decided.)
6. Official visit to an Israeli defence installation by a top military leader. (This tour is rarely offered.) You will see strategic military positions, plus experience first-hand the battle Israel faces.
7. A Bibleland tour that avoids ancient Byzantine churches while emphasising the places where Jesus Himself, Moses, Abraham and other Bible Greats lived and walked.'¹¹⁶⁹

The order is significant - Falwell and Begin first with Jesus and other 'Bible Greats' last. The ICZC in Jerusalem specifically promotes 'solidarity tours' which are designed to enable Christians not only to visit the traditional tourist places 'but see the settlements and other places and people who specifically need our support, comfort and love.'¹¹⁷⁰ According to Kamal Farah of the Anglican Pilgrimage Office, it is the policy of the Israeli government to ensure all tourists and pilgrims visit the three key sites of Yad Vashem, the Wailing Wall and Masada in order to perpetuate a favourable image of Israel, stifle criticism and reinforce their claim to the land:

'The Holocaust Museum reminds those who come that Christians are guilty of perpetrating the holocaust, and to represent Israel as a victim;

¹¹⁶⁸ Israel Travel News, Pilgrimage 1993: A Manual for Agents. Summer (1993), p8.

¹¹⁶⁹ Wagner, 'Beyond', op.cit., pp1-13.

¹¹⁷⁰ International Christian Zionist Centre, 'About Us – Israel My Beloved' <http://www.israelmybeloved.com>

The Wailing Wall is the religious place where they speak about waiting for the coming of the Messiah; and Masada represents a nation struggling for life and freedom. The whole story of how Masada should never fall again. This is the famous idea of being free, being independent and being ready to die for freedom rather than as slaves in their own country.¹¹⁷¹

Christian Zionist tours embrace this Israeli agenda. They focus on the religious and political significance of contemporary Israel with speakers from the Israeli government and visits to the settlements to reinforce Israel's claim to the land and place in prophecy. They invariably stay in Israeli hotels or Kibbutzim, use Israeli buses and guides and frequent Israeli tourist shops and restaurants.

For example, to assist the settlements in becoming self-sustaining, Christian Friends of Israeli Communities (CFOIC) works closely with Lev Ha'Aretz, the tourism body for Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, to promote Christian tours to biblical sites now managed by the settlers. There are many Old Testament sites around Nablus, or ancient Shechem, for example: Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, on which the Israelites were promised blessings and curses; Sebaste, the capital of the ancient Kingdom of Israel and then of Samaria; Elon Moreh, where God promised Abraham the land; and Shiloh, for 369 years home to the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant. Doina Chiacu describes how Jewish settlers stake a biblical claim to the Occupied Territories and 'a sliver of Israel's \$3 billion-a-year tourism industry' with new hotels, advertising campaigns, and tour guides.¹¹⁷² Sondra Baras of CFOIC explains how they are seeking to funnel more Christian tourists into these settlements. 'We're saying, "These are the places where the Bible happened – wouldn't you like to see them?"'¹¹⁷³ Christian Zionists with close ties to the Old Testament are visiting the sites associated with settlements in greater numbers. Yigal Dilmoni, tourism director for the Samaria regional council claims the area is getting around 40,000 Christian visitors annually. Tel Shiloh alone logged more than 20,000 visitors in 1999, more than 70% of them evangelicals from the US and Europe. According to Sharvit. 'Protestants feel they have a

¹¹⁷¹ Wagner, op.cit.

¹¹⁷² Doina Chiacu, 'Courting the Christians,' Jerusalem Post, 24 March (2000).

connection to the place ... I get so excited when I hear them talking about the Tabernacle. They know it; they feel it. Some burst into song or prayer at the Tabernacle site, while others take its measurements to see if they correspond to those in Exodus 27.' Baras describes similar reactions. 'They're just spellbound. There's no other word ... I've seen groups just pray and sing. It's a whole experience. They join hands in prayer - very spontaneously - because they are so moved by what they see.'¹¹⁷⁴

In the Spring of 2003, Jewish settlers from Gush Eztion, an illegal settlement near Hebron, began organising 'terror tours' offering Americans a four day excursion which includes hand to hand combat simulation with terrorists, weapons training from IDF experts including tanks and an F-16, an aerial tour of 'terrorist enclaves' and 'a live-fire simulation of an attack on a settlement'.¹¹⁷⁵ Jay Greenwald, founder of Holy Land Concepts Inc. and Regional Coordinator for Gush Etzion, claims, 'There's a lot of "wow" factor, like going up in an army helicopter and firing machine guns but it is also aimed at training people in how to deal with terrorist situations.' The highlight of the tour, Greenwald claims, is a paintball fight in a simulated Arab village, where 'participants will be able to go room-to-room 'cleaning out Arab terrorists''¹¹⁷⁶

The politicisation of tourism in the West Bank is evident from Baras' concern over the influence of Palestinians in the industry. This goes well beyond issues of market share or competition:

'We are seeing a growing tendency among Christians to use Palestinian tour buses and tour guides. I think it's very unfortunate for Israel because they're getting an anti-Israeli message. Tourism is not just economics; tourism is putting on your best face. And the Israeli tour guide is our most important ambassador.'¹¹⁷⁷

CMJ, while essentially a Christian missionary society, also runs its own pro-Zionist tour company, Shoresh Tours, as well as a guest house for pilgrim groups, both based at Christ Church in Jerusalem.

¹¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁵ Ed O'Loughlin, 'Hebron sells itself on terror tourism,' 8 March (2003) <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2003/03/07/1046826527588.html>

¹¹⁷⁶ 'Settlers offer West Bank terror tours' http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/2821391.stm

Pilgrimage research has shown that approximately 95% of Western tour groups visiting the Holy Land fail to make any contact with the indigenous Christian community.¹¹⁷⁸ While traditional pilgrimage groups are largely indifferent to the existence of an indigenous Christian community and focus on the biblical sites, pro-Israeli groups, drawn predominantly from American fundamentalist churches, visit the Holy Land with an apocalyptic agenda. They see themselves as active participants in what are the 'Last Days', showing solidarity with Israel. Kenneth Cragg, former assistant Bishop of Jerusalem, has observed:

'Local Christians are caught in a degree of museumization. They are aware of tourists who come in great volume from the West to savour holy places but who are, for the most part, blithely disinterested in the people who indwell them. The pain of the indifference is not eased insofar as the same tourism is subtly manipulated to make the case for the entire legitimacy of the statehood that regulates it.'¹¹⁷⁹

The consequences for the indigenous Christian communities are entirely deleterious. The following diagram illustrates the destructive cumulative effects of these Zionist tours.

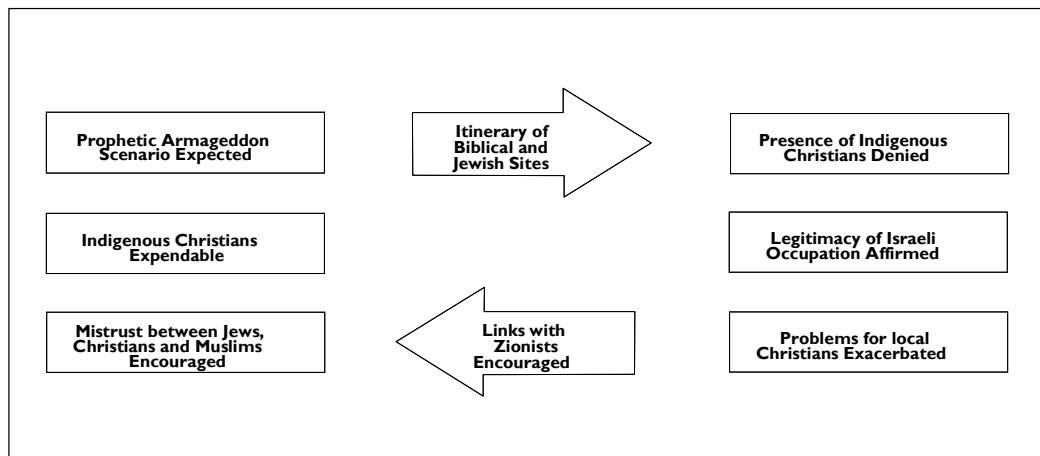


Figure 7: The cumulative effect of Christian Zionist pilgrimages¹¹⁸⁰

¹¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁸ Stephen Sizer, *Visiting the Living Stones, Pilgrimages to the Un-Holy Land*. An investigation of the perceptions of British and Palestinian Christians on the subject of pilgrimages to the Holy Land, with particular reference to their impact on the indigenous Anglican Church in Israel and the Occupied Territories. Unpublished thesis submitted in part-fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of M.Th. in Applied Theology, University of Oxford, (1994).

¹¹⁷⁹ Kenneth Cragg, *The Arab Christian*, (London, Mowbray, 1992).

¹¹⁸⁰ Stephen Sizer, 'Render to Caesar – the politics of pilgrimage tourism to the Holy

The principal motivation among Christian Zionists for visiting the Holy Land is primarily to bring a blessing to the Jewish people, especially the settlers who are reclaiming Judea and Samaria. They seek to show solidarity with the State of Israel and witness the literal fulfilment of Biblical prophecy. The presence of an indigenous Palestinian Christian community is an unwelcome complication either demonised as Muslim fundamentalists or cast as recent economic migrants, drawn by the wealth of Israel. With greater contact occurring between western Christians and the State of Israel, Christian Zionists return home galvanised in their support for agencies encouraging Jewish people to make aliyah and claim their inheritance.

2. Restorationism : Facilitating Aliyah from Russia and Eastern Europe

From the days of Joseph Wolff's expeditions to find the lost tribes of Israel in the 1820s, Christian Zionists have been convinced that it is God's will for the Jewish people to return to Israel since it was given in perpetuity to the descendants of Abraham. With the fall of Communism in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) and Eastern Europe, Christians Zionists have become increasingly active in facilitating Jewish émigrés to make aliyah.¹¹⁸¹ A study of one agency, CMJ, illustrates the tension which Restorationism causes. While Tony Highton insists that CMJ, '... is not involved in actively encouraging Jewish people to move to Israel,'¹¹⁸² Kelvin Crombie claims that part of the reason for CMJ's popularity in the 19th Century was the conviction that 'God was going to use England to play a leading role in helping to restore the Jewish people to their homeland and to their Messiah.'¹¹⁸³ In 1992 the Council of CMJ reaffirmed, 'We see the return of the Jewish people to the

Land' International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 10:1, (1998), pp39-40.

¹¹⁸¹ 'Aliyah' means 'going up' and is used to describe going up to Jerusalem on pilgrimage. The Israel government plays down the involvement of Christians in bring Jews from the FSU. Brearley claims only 2% of the Jewish Agency budget for 'airlifting' Soviet immigrants has been contributed by Christian Zionists. This only includes donations made directly to the Jewish Agency. Margaret Brearley, 'Jerusalem for Christian Zionists' in Jerusalem, Past and Present in the Purposes of God, edited by P.W.L. Walker (Croydon, Deo Gloria Trust, 1992), p112; <http://www.christiansforisrael.org>

¹¹⁸² Unpublished letter from Tony Highton, General Director of CMJ, 8 July (2000).

¹¹⁸³ Crombie, op.cit., pp13-14.

Land of Israel as a sign of God's faithfulness as revealed in the scriptures.'¹¹⁸⁴ Their commitment, 'recalls the influence that the "Restoration of Israel" theology had on many of the Society's founders.'¹¹⁸⁵ In the 1996 CMJ Annual Report, and in special editions of Shalom in 1998, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel, Walter Riggans and Kelvin Crombie reaffirmed CMJ's commitment to Restorationism:

'In our day there seems to be in some Christian circles a restriction of interest to the State of Israel and to the significance of various events for the unfolding of biblical prophecies relating to the end times. CMJ has always been at the forefront of teaching about God's restoration of the Jewish people to and in Israel, and we are continually excited by, and watchful of all that is happening. We are humbled by what the Lord is doing among Israeli believers. In other words, our prayerful interest in the State of Israel is as constant and committed as ever.'¹¹⁸⁶

Crombie's claims corroborate a pamphlet CMJ published in Israel in 1990:

ITAC (1990)	Crombie (1998)
ITAC, as the London Jews Society is known today, has always believed, proclaimed and worked towards the return of the Jewish people to Zion. This policy is rooted in a firm belief in the message of biblical prophecy which has accurately foretold these things. ¹¹⁸⁷	In the 140 years leading to the formation of the State of Israel CMJ believed in, and worked towards, the restoration of the Jewish People to their own land. Our hope and prayer is that CMJ can continue in this commitment and that the society can uphold its unique heritage. ¹¹⁸⁸

Figure 8: A comparison between statements on Restorationism by ITAC and Crombie

Higton claims that such statements are 'rhetorical rather than literal.'¹¹⁸⁹ Nevertheless, Shalom articles¹¹⁹⁰ together with links to agencies associated with Restorationism from CMJ's own website demonstrate a degree of commitment to agencies active in Restorationism, at least among some CMJ

¹¹⁸⁴ 'CMJ Commitment', CMJ Council, 2 November (1992).

¹¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁸⁶ Walter Riggans, General Director's Annual Report 1996 (St Albans, CMJ, 1996).

¹¹⁸⁷ Israel Trust of the Anglican Church, Immanuel House, Tel Aviv 1866-1990 (Tel Aviv, ITAC, 1990).

¹¹⁸⁸ Kelvin Crombie, 'CMJ and the Restoration of Israel' Shalom, 1 (1998).

¹¹⁸⁹ Unpublished letter from Tony Higton, General Director of CMJ, 8 July (2000).

¹¹⁹⁰ Anne Dexter, 'The Eternal Covenant, Part 3, Exile and Restoration', Shalom, June (1989), pp. 10-11; Murray Dixon, 'Zionism and Christian Zionism after fifty years' Shalom, 3 (1998).

staff, which matches that of other Christian Zionist agencies such as ICEJ and BFP.

2.1 By Land and Sea : From Restoration to Transportation

Since 1980, a coalition of Christian Zionist agencies has taken the initiative in encouraging Jewish people to emigrate to Israel, seeing this as the fulfilment of prophecy. The ICEJ assert:

‘In no uncertain terms God has made known His intention to regather the scattered Jewish people and to plant them in the land with His “whole heart and soul” (Jeremiah 32:41). We believe that in the present massive wave of Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel (almost 400,000 since September 1989), the world is witnessing one of the most startling prophetic fulfilments of our time - one that should deeply touch the heart of every Bible-believing Christian and provoke him to action.’¹¹⁹¹

Exobus was probably the first Christian Zionist agency to turn the doctrine of Restorationism into a reality and assist Jews in the former Soviet Union (FSU) to make aliyah. Exobus was founded in 1984 by Phil Hunter, director of the Good News Travels Bus Company, based in Hull, for the purpose of facilitating the transportation of Jews from the FSU to Israel. The first Exobus team was sent to the Ukraine in 1991 and since then they have assisted over 56,000 Jewish people to emigrate to Israel in close cooperation with the Jewish Agency. Exobus is now probably the largest Christian agency facilitating aliyah, comprising 80 team members, drawn from 13 countries and operating 40 vehicles. Exobus transports approximately 1,200 Jews overland from 16 different bases in the FSU each month.¹¹⁹² The main financial support for Exobus comes from a sister agency, Christians for Israel International, who promote Exobus in the US.¹¹⁹³

Combining economic incentive with biblical argument, their ‘fishing’ teams visit Jewish communities and present concerts in Hebrew with song and dance. They explain from the Old Testament the biblical basis for making aliyah. Videos of émigrés from their own home town are shown, giving

¹¹⁹¹ International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, (Jerusalem, ICEJ, 1993), p9.

¹¹⁹² <http://www.christiansforisrael.org>

¹¹⁹³ Ibid.

testimonies of how they have been blessed by moving to Israel.¹¹⁹⁴ Exobus focuses their operations on the Ukraine which has the largest concentration of Jews, after New York and Israel. They do so because, they claim, 'it has the highest and worst history of anti-Semitism in the world.'¹¹⁹⁵

At the Third International Christian Zionist Congress held in Jerusalem in 1996, under the auspices of the ICEJ, a resolution was passed committing Christians to assist Jewish people make aliyah: 'Christian believers are instructed by Scripture to acknowledge the Hebraic roots of their faith and to actively assist and participate in the plan of God for the ingathering of the Jewish People and the restoration of the nation of Israel in our day.'¹¹⁹⁶ Since 1991, the ICEJ has paid for the transportation of 40,000 immigrants, 15,000 of whom were taken to Israel on 51 ICEJ sponsored flights.¹¹⁹⁷ ICEJ Russian team members are especially active in the more remote regions of the FSU. Like Exobus, the ICEJ and Bridges for Peace describe their ministry in terms of 'fishing' for Jews, based on Jeremiah 16:16. They locate Jews, persuade them to emigrate, help them obtain documents to prove their Jewish origins, distribute humanitarian packages and pay for exit permits, passports, debt repayment, transport and accommodation while their applications are processed by the Jewish Agency in the larger Russian cities.¹¹⁹⁸ Once in Israel, ICEJ as well as BFP assist émigrés with their resettlement costs, providing food, clothing, blankets, kitchen and school supplies as well as medical equipment, if needed.¹¹⁹⁹

Another organisation active in transporting Jews to Israel is called the Ebenezer Emergency Fund. In December 1991, Gustav Scheller, a Swiss born Englishman, sponsored a ship to bring Jews to Israel via the Black Sea port of Odessa. Inspired by Isaiah 60:9, '... in the lead are the ships of Tarshish, bringing your sons from afar, with their silver and gold', Scheller's 'Operation Exodus' has organised 135 sailings, bringing some 4,500 immigrants to Israel. Indeed, as a result of Scheller's vision, the first direct

¹¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁹⁶ 'International Christian Zionist Congress Proclamation', International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem. 25-29 February 1996.

¹¹⁹⁷ Patricia Golan, 'On Wings of Faith' Jerusalem Post, 20 December 2001.

¹¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

sea route since 1948 was opened from Russia to Israel. In order to gain the support of the Knesset and Jewish Agency, Scheller signed a charter stipulating that missionary activity by Ebenezer staff was forbidden before, during or after the voyages. Johannes Facius, chief executive of the Ebenezer Emergency Fund said, 'We felt we needed to let the authorities know that we would never initiate any kind of missionary activity. This is not our calling; our calling is to be part of the aliyah.'¹²⁰⁰ Exobus also adhere to a 'non-missionising policy' but instead seek to share their faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, believing God's call upon their lives as believing Gentiles is to help the Jewish people home.¹²⁰¹ There remains some ambiguity, nevertheless, since Jews for Jesus, for example, encourage their supporters to send money 'to ministries that both rescue and witness to Jews, like Operation Exodus' Ebenezer Emergency Fund, Bridges for Peace and Blossoming Rose.'¹²⁰²

2.2 Fishermen and Hunters : The Incentives for Making Aliyah

Controversially, in 1992, ICEJ recognised that the number of Russians emigrating to Israel was declining and therefore a new, more explicit strategy was devised to 'persuade' Jews to make aliyah. Believing that many Jews in the FSU were 'sitting on the fence concerning Israel,' the ICEJ initiated the production of new material and videos to encourage Jews to leave before the window of opportunity was closed again. Using a double-decker bus equipped with a theatre and audio-visual exhibition about Israel, an ICEJ team toured the FSU claiming, 'The task of the fisher is to encourage them with a "good report" of the land like Joshua and Caleb, before God sends the hunters. The biblical fact is that in Israel, they have a "future and a hope."¹²⁰³ The implication is clear, as in pre-war Germany, the Jews should leave before 'God sends the hunters', the door closes and anti-Semitism increases. Jan Willem van der Hoeven is convinced that even Jews living in the United States will eventually emigrate to Palestine and that God may use anti-

¹¹⁹⁹ Wagner, op.cit., p108; Golan, op.cit.

¹²⁰⁰ Golan, op.cit.

¹²⁰¹ Ibid.

¹²⁰² Ibid.

¹²⁰³ International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, (Jerusalem, ICEJ, 1993), p10.

Semitism to achieve it. 'I pray that even if it takes anti-Semitism in America, God may use it to get his millions back to Israel. So we must have enough room there. So if we have six million American Jews coming we cannot give up the West Bank, can we?'¹²⁰⁴

Convinced that anti-Semitism is indeed on the rise in the FSU, Glen Hines has set up a worldwide network of boat and yacht owners, who are willing to assist Jews escape. Called 'Operation Tarshish' it is also based on Isaiah 60:9. When needed, the 'boaters' will head for Russian ports to assist in a 'mass rescue operation'. Haines believes that when the doors close for Jewish people to leave the FSU, 'and persecution begins on a massive scale, that will be the time when "the ships of Tarshish" will be called upon by God, to bring his scattered children home.'¹²⁰⁵ In line with his apocalyptic eschatology, Hines believes this will happen soon.

2.3 Funding Restorationism in Life and Death

Probably the most influential way Christians participate in Restorationism is by fundraising. John Hagee, for example, uses TV to solicit funds to facilitate Jews emigrating to Israel. He recently hosted a 'Tribute to Israel' service at his non-denominational Cornerstone Church in San Antonio, Texas, which was also syndicated as one of his daily nationwide TV programmes. The service included the church choir performing Hebrew songs and a guest appearance of the former Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. During the programme a message appeared at the bottom of the screen promising '\$300 will bring a Jew to Israel', and gave an 800-number to enable viewers to pledge money to support the aliyah effort from the FSU.¹²⁰⁶ According to Micha Limor, head of the European desk of Keren Hayesod's 'United Israel Appeal', in Germany alone there are 50 different evangelical groups involved in encouraging, promoting and financing emigration of Jews to Israel.¹²⁰⁷

¹²⁰⁴ Jan Willem van der Hoeven, Israel cassette, talk given at Livets Ord (The Word of Life), Uppsala, Sweden, 2 December 1990, cited in Lester Wikstrom 'The Return of the Jews and the Return of Jesus: Christian Zionism in the 1970's and 1980's.' *Al-Liqa Journal*, May (1994), p76.

¹²⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁰⁷ Keren Hayesod was founded in July 1920 at the London Zionist Congress as the public treasury to build Jewish Palestine. The Congress declared that it was the absolute duty

The consequences of assisting Russians to emigrate to Israel cannot always be anticipated. In 1995, CMJ and the Diocese of Jerusalem were the subject of a Hebrew newspaper exposé. The criteria under which Russians may be allowed entry into Israel is somewhat more lax than the criteria used by the Orthodox Jewish authorities to determine who may be buried in a Jewish cemetery. It seems they had refused to bury some Russian émigrés and CMJ staff in Israel came to an arrangement with a Jewish funeral director to allow their burial in the Anglican cemetery in Jaffa, apparently without the knowledge or consent of the Anglican Diocese. The cemetery, intended for Anglican Palestinians and expatriates, is therefore now full of Russian graves.

Over the last ten years, based on their apocalyptic eschatology and somewhat dubious hermeneutic, Christian Zionists have facilitated one of the largest mass migrations of people since 1948. Raising tens of millions of dollars they have assisted many of the 700,000 Jewish émigrés from the FSU and Eastern Europe to make aliyah. It is uncertain how many of these have done so out of religious conviction, as economic migrants, or from fear arising from the tactics used by Christian Zionist ‘fishermen’.

Believing the West Bank forms an integral part of the land given by God to the Jewish people for ever, Christian Zionists have not only assisted Jews to emigrate from the FSU, they have also supported their resettlement within the Occupied Territories.

3. Eretz Israel : Sustaining the West Bank Settlements

For religious Zionism, Jewish and Christian, the legitimate borders of Israel are considerably larger than those presently disputed with Syria, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority. In 1917, the Balfour Declaration promised the Jewish people a homeland within Mandate Palestine, which then extended to both sides of the Jordan River. Zionists assumed that this would all be ceded to the new Jewish state. However, in 1922 Winston Churchill removed 78% of the territory and gave it to the Hashemite family to form what was initially called Transjordania.¹²⁰⁸ The termination of the British Mandate, due in large

of every Jew to pay tithes to Keren Hayesod for the benefit of Israel.
<http://www.jpost.com/Editions/2001/12/16/Features/Features.40027.html>
<http://www.wzo.org.il/home/dev/karen.htm>

¹²⁰⁸ David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, (New York, Henry Holt, 1989), p528.

measure to Jewish terrorism, together with the unilateral declaration of the State of Israel led to the war of 1948 since Jews and Arabs could not agree to the 1947 UN partition proposal.

There are as a consequence three separate sets of disputed borders of Israel: those recognised by the international community in 1949 but no longer by Israel; the borders following the war of 1967, including the Golan, Gaza and the West Bank, occupied by Israel and held in breach of numerous UN Security Council resolutions; and the much larger borders promised by God to Abraham which religious Zionists believe are Israel's legitimate inheritance. Following the war of 1948, the borders of Israel agreed at the 1949 Armistice were considerably larger than those offered Israel in the 1947 Partition Plan. These nevertheless came to be recognised internationally as the *de facto* borders of the State of Israel. However, they were difficult to defend militarily and tensions led to the Suez Crisis with Egypt in 1956 and Six Day War with its Arab neighbours in 1967. The war of 1967 resulted in Israel conquering the Golan Heights from Syria, the West Bank from Jordan and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt. In 1977, when Menachim Begin and the Likud Party came to power, they began to utilize biblical imagery to justify the military occupation and settlement of the West Bank renaming it 'Judea and Samaria.' They also gave Hebrew names to settlements located near ancient biblical towns and villages, reinforcing an historical claim stretching back 3,000 years.¹²⁰⁹

Christian involvement in the realisation of Eretz Israel includes the military justification of these enlarged borders; the political adoption of the settlement programme; and economic support for the settler movement.

3.1 Justifying Eretz Israel

David Allen Lewis, President of Christians United for Israel, puts the territorial claims of Israel into the wider context of the Middle East. He observes that, 'The Arabs already have 99.5 per cent of the land ... this cannot be tolerated.'¹²¹⁰ Derek Prince also voices the common complaint among

¹²⁰⁹ Martha Jacobs, 'The Key to Israel's Defense' *Issues*, 4, 2.

¹²¹⁰ David Allen Lewis, 'Christian Zionist Theses', *Christians and Israel*, (Jerusalem, International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem, 1996), p9.

Christian Zionists who lament that Israel 'has only 22% of the original inheritance offered the Jews'¹²¹¹ by the British government in 1917. Echoing the experience of the Israelites under Pharaoh, Jan Willem van der Hoeven offers a theological rationalisation for Israel's victory in 1948 and a justification for its refusal to withdraw from what Lindsey describes as 'biblically Jewish lands.'¹²¹²

'God wanted to give His people that part of the land which they did not receive in 1948, and by hardening the hearts of the different Arab leaders - Presidents Nasser and Assad and King Hussein - He impelled Israel to react. The result of what became known as the Six Day War was that Judea and Samaria - heartland of biblical Israel - and the ancient city of Jerusalem - King David's capital - were returned to their original owner ... Thus, the Lord, by hardening the hearts of the Arab leaders, caused His people Israel to inherit the rest of the land, especially their ancient city, in a war of self defense! Until then, since 1949, Jordan had illegally held and occupied the "West Bank" and Jerusalem. Thus, when Israel recaptured Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem, they did not even take over a territory that legally belonged at that time to any nation! How few in the West have even realized this. God has His own sovereign way to fulfil His Word and promise.'¹²¹³

Bridges for Peace also asks the rhetorical question: 'What is so sacred about the June 4th, 1967 line?' Nothing, they argue since historically this was all part of biblical Israel and 'squarely won in defensive battles in 1967 and 1973.' Referring to the Golan, they claim that because it was legitimately annexed by Israel in 1980, Christians should lobby their elected officials 'to protect Israel's right to the Golan Heights and not pressure Israel into giving it away to the Syrians.'¹²¹⁴

At the First International Christian Zionist Conference held in 1985 and sponsored by the ICEJ, a resolution was passed calling upon the world to recognise this judaization of Palestine: 'All nations should recognise Judea and Samaria as belonging to Israel ... This Congress declares that Judea and

¹²¹¹ Derek Prince, The Destiny of Israel and the Church, (Milton Keynes, Word, 1992), p71.

¹²¹² Lindsey, Final, op.cit., p122.

¹²¹³ Jan Willem van der Hoeven, Babylon or Jerusalem? (Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, Destiny Image Publishers, 1993), p151.

¹²¹⁴ Bridges for Peace 'The Golan Heights Déjà vu', Despatch from Jerusalem, September (1999), pp10-11.

Samaria (inaccurately termed “the West Bank”) are, and by biblical right as well as international law and practice ought to be, a part of Israel.’¹²¹⁵

At the Third International Christian Zionist Congress held in Jerusalem in February 1996, some 1,500 delegates from over 40 countries unanimously affirmed a more explicit declaration of Israeli sovereignty: ‘The Land of Israel has been given to the Jewish People by God as an everlasting possession by an eternal covenant. The Jewish People have the absolute right to possess and dwell in the Land, including Judea, Samaria, Gaza and the Golan.’¹²¹⁶

The purpose of Israel’s occupation of the Golan, West Bank and Gaza goes well beyond the need for secure borders. Anne Dexter explains why negotiations involving a ‘land for peace’ deal will never appease religious Zionists, Jewish or Christian. Claiming that the question of ancient boundaries cannot be ignored, she insists that these biblical borders underlie the policies of many Israeli politicians, notably the right wing Likud party. While Sinai is always negotiable, having twice been invaded and relinquished, it is for this reason that Jewish settlements on the West Bank and Golan Heights are not simply a matter of secure and defensible borders. ‘It is the guiding principle in Israel’s interpretation of West Bank autonomy, which insists that whatever the degree of self-determination allowed the people, the land itself belongs to Israel.’¹²¹⁷ In her view, Palestinians may be allowed limited autonomy but not statehood. She argues that Palestinian Christians, in particular, must accept Zionism and the settlements and learn to live with them. ‘Arab Christians are squarely faced with the biblical election of the Jews, and their role throughout history, particularly in the present.’¹²¹⁸

This conviction that the entire West Bank is integral to Israel has led many Christian Zionists to ‘adopt’ exclusive Jewish settlements to strengthen their claim to the land.

¹²¹⁵ Declaration of the First International Christian Zionist Leadership Conference (Jerusalem, International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem, 1985).

¹²¹⁶ International Christian Zionist Congress Proclamation, International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem. 25-29 February 1996.

¹²¹⁷ Anne Dexter, View the Land, (South Plainfield, New Jersey, Bridge, 1986), pp214-215.

¹²¹⁸ Ibid., p32.

3.2 Adopting the Settlements

Since 1967, using various economic and tax incentives as well as appealing to biblical rhetoric, Israel has encouraged over 400,000 Jews to colonize East Jerusalem, The West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights through 190 illegal settlements.¹²¹⁹ Several Christian Zionist organisations have given their full support to this judaization of the Occupied Territories. Jews for Jesus, for example, compares Israeli settlements in the Palestinian Territories with the settlement of Texas by the United States. 'Many might wish that the Israeli government could feel secure enough to withdraw the settlements on the West Bank. But on the same basis, the United States should seriously consider giving Texas back to Mexico and, indeed, should never have settled it in the first place.'¹²²⁰ The Christian Friends of Israeli Communities (CFOIC), founded by Ted Beckett in 1995, works in partnership with Christian Friends of Israel (CFI) and defines a settlement as:

'A piece of land where brave, Jewish pioneers have taken up residence. In most cases it is a barren rocky hilltop set up to establish a Jewish community where none had existed for thousands of years. In some case, such as Shiloh, settlements are established on the original site of an ancient Jewish city. In others such as Hevron and Gush Etzion, a Jewish community is established on the site of a community destroyed by Arab armies during or prior to Israel's War of Independence.'¹²²¹

Tony Higton claims CMJ does not have an official view on the presence of Jewish Settlements in the Occupied Territories. 'The current leadership of the Society wants to see a just and peaceful settlement for both Israel and the Palestinians.'¹²²² However, in a controversial decision made in October 1999, and following the example of Clarence Wagner of BFP, Ray Lockhart, the director of CMJ in Israel, moved into Gilo, an illegal Jewish settlement south of Jerusalem built on confiscated Palestinian land belonging to the community

¹²¹⁹ 'Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories' Foundation for Middle East Peace, March (2002). FMEP list 190 settlements with a total population of 213,672 in the West Bank and Gaza; 170,400 in East Jerusalem; and 17,000 in the Golan Heights, making a total of 401,072 settlers based on 2001 figures.

¹²²⁰ 'zionism.htm' Jews for Jesus FAQ, <http://www.jewsforjesus.org>

¹²²¹ <http://www.cfoic.com>

¹²²² Unpublished letter from Tony Higton, General Director of CMJ, 8 July 2000.

of Beit Jala.¹²²³ Higton initially justified the placing of CMJ staff in Gilo on evangelistic grounds, but when challenged, questioned whether Gilo should be classified as a settlement.¹²²⁴

‘There was of course, no political aspect to this decision. The Society is called to witness to Jewish people wherever they are. I’m sure that you would agree that Jewish people in Gilo need to hear the Gospel. They won’t hear it from a church building. But they can from Christians who live in the community.’¹²²⁵

Bishop Riah Abu El Assal, of the Anglican Diocese in Jerusalem, responded by describing CMJ’s decision as ‘unconvincing, offensive and provocative.’

‘Much as I would like to believe that there was no political aspect ... it would be hard to do so. It seems incongruous to me that one lives in Gilo, but at the same time is a-political ... Neutrality here is an illusion, and we deceive ourselves by claiming to be neutral ... If one has Zionist tendencies, let it be so; but, let it be clear as well ... I need not remind you that Gilo is an Occupied Territory ... I need not remind you of the many UN Resolutions that await implementation concerning those settlements. Those settlements have caused further fragmentation among the Palestinian population, are environmentally unsustainable, and incongruent with indigenous land use. Their existence is a direct violation of international law. Their existence creates a major political dilemma for the Palestinian authority and the Israeli government, and their further expansion will not only render Palestinian geographic integrity impossible, but will also affect the quality of life for future generations ... I actually find them offensive and provocative to the Christians who live in Beit Jala and Bethlehem, who have no power of themselves to shout, as many do in Gilo.’¹²²⁶

CMJ’s unilateral decision to place staff in a Jewish settlement, while pleasing to the Israeli authorities, undermines the witness of the indigenous Christian community and compromises the wider church’s stance in upholding the rule of international law. Some organisations, however, have gone much further than CMJ. Christian Friends of Israeli Communities (CFOIC) encourages evangelical churches to participate in their ‘Adopt a Settlement’ programme to support the ‘brave Jewish settlers’ living in ‘Judea and Samaria, known as the

¹²²³ Ray Lockhart, ‘From Israel with Love’ *Shalom*, 1, (2001), p3.

¹²²⁴ Unpublished email from Tony Higton to Riah Abu El Assal, 31 March 2001.

¹²²⁵ Ibid.

¹²²⁶ Unpublished letter of Riah Abu El Assal to Tony Higton, 8 March 2001.

mountains of Israel and plains of Gaza.’¹²²⁷ Their mandate is ‘to provide solidarity and aid to beleaguered Israeli settlers.’ They insist they are not an evangelistic ministry but a support outreach of love and building bridges.’ Motivated by Isaiah 40:1, ‘Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith the Lord’, they claim:

‘This outreach, the first of its kind in the history of Christian Jewish relations, mobilizes Christians to be actively involved with the Jewish settlements. It is these pioneers who are now fulfilling the promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants regarding the restoration of *all* the land Biblically allotted to Israel.’¹²²⁸

So far, CFOIC’s ‘progress meter’ shows that 39 illegal Israeli settlements have been adopted by 50 denominational as well as independent churches in the USA, South Africa, Germany, Holland and the Philippines. For example, Ariel has been adopted by Faith Bible Chapel in Arvada, Colorado; Hevron by Greater Harvest in Tallahassee, Florida; Alei Zahav by Calvary Chapel in Nashville; Revava by the United Methodist Church in Green Forest, Arizona; and Psagot by Tarana Baptist Chapel in Tarzana, California. To strengthen the settlers’ claim to the land, CFOIC publish maps on their website showing the few areas of the West Bank given back to the Palestinian Authority. In deference to religious Zionists who will not print God’s name, CFOIC lament the ‘partition’ of the land as ‘the reality of the “peace process” for those living in the Land G-d promised the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for ever!’¹²²⁹ Christian Zionists have not only made a clear stand in justifying Israel’s illegal settlement of the West Bank. Their ‘adoption’ programme is also intended to be a means by which financial assistance as well as practical support for the settlers is delivered.

3.3 Funding the Settlers

Besides facilitating the emigration of Jews to Israel, several Christian Zionist agencies are active in funding illegal Jewish settlements in the West Bank. During the 1991 ICEJ Feast of Tabernacles celebration, for example,

¹²²⁷ <http://www.cfoic.com>; Sarah Honig, ‘Adopt-a-Settlement Program’ *The Jerusalem Post*, 2nd October (1995);

¹²²⁸ <http://www.bridgesforpeace.com/publications/dispatch/lifeinisrael/Article-12.html>

¹²²⁹ *Ibid.*

representatives from 12 countries presented cheques to the Israeli Prime Minister, Yitshak Shamir, to help finance the settlements.¹²³⁰ Through their 'Social Assistance Programme' ICEJ also provides financial support for projects in the Jewish settlements, including bullet proof vests to strengthen the resolve of settlers, living among what they describe as '3 million hostile Palestinians.'¹²³¹ ICEJ's 'Bulletproof Bus for Efrat' appeal, for example, is also raising \$150,000 to purchase an armour plated bus to transport settlers in and out of the West Bank from Efrat settlement.¹²³² Bridges for Peace (BFP) has a similar scheme called 'Operation Ezra' which funds over 50 otherwise unsustainable projects such as the settlement farm, Sde Bar, near Beit Jala and the Herodian.¹²³³ CFOIC aid for the settlements has also included medical equipment, computers, preschool supplies, library books, and furniture. They call upon Christians to pray for:

'The safety of the Jewish settlers and for terrorist incidents to stop. Raising up of righteous leadership in the USA, Israel and other countries to support peace with security in the Holy Land. More Christians to catch the vision and link up with Jewish settlers. Unity in Israel among the feuding parties that they will put aside self interest and trust in God for their peace and strength. That the giving away of land to the PLO will be reversed.'¹²³⁴

Ray Sanders, director of Christian Friends of Israel, believes God raised up CFOIC at this strategic time as a response to the attempts to 'demoralise the residents of Judea, Samaria and Gaza and invalidate their rights to live in the land that God has given to them':

'The recent crisis in Israel, however, has changed our priorities somewhat. The Jewish communities of Judea, Samaria and Gaza are facing their most difficult challenges ever. Long the object of international scorn, these people are now facing physical danger of unprecedented severity. The simplest journey to work or to school has become a life-threatening experience.'¹²³⁵

¹²³⁰ Wagner, Anxious, op.cit., p108.

¹²³¹ International Christian Embassy, <http://www.icej.org.il/about.html>; 'Life in the Settlements', Word from Jerusalem, May (2002), p7.

¹²³² International Christian Embassy, 'Bulletproof Bus for Efrat' appeal, Word from Jerusalem, May (2002).

¹²³³ Bridges for Peace, 'New Life on the Farm' Despatch from Jerusalem, January (2000),

p5.

¹²³⁴ Ibid.

¹²³⁵ Ibid.

CFOIC take heart from the promise given by Ezekiel, 'But you, O mountains of Israel, will produce branches and fruit for my people Israel, for they will soon come home' (Ezekiel 36:8). They insist, 'it is critical to show another face of Christianity, one that will last and not give in to international pressure tactics.' However tenuous, biblical mandate and divine imperative make for a powerful combination in the contemporary justification for the occupation and settlement of the rest of Eretz Israel. In order to achieve this vision it is imperative therefore that Israel retain, strengthen and expand its settlement programme in the Occupied Territories.

The effect of the pro-Israeli lobby on American foreign policy concerning the settlements appears to be working. Lind observes that during the Carter administration, the settlements were regarded as 'illegal'; under Reagan they became an 'obstacle' to peace; while now they have simply become a 'complicating factor.'¹²³⁶

Christian Zionist organisations such as ICEJ, BFP and CFOIC, as well as some of the leaders of CMJ and JFJ, are unequivocal not only in justifying Israel's present borders and defending the settlement programme, but also in offering practical and financial assistance to sustain and make permanent this annexation of Palestinian territory. Integral to this strategy is Jerusalem and the progressive Judaizing, occupation and settlement of Arab East Jerusalem and the Old City. For Zionism there can be no compromise, since controlling Jerusalem has always been a barometer of their existence as a nation.

4. Jerusalem : Lobbying for International Recognition

At the core of Christian Zionist support for Israel's claim to the Occupied Territories lies the conviction that Jerusalem is, and must remain, the exclusive and undivided Jewish capital. Attempts to reach agreement in the wider Arab-Israeli conflict have so far stalled or stumbled over the final status of Jerusalem. Christian Zionists are strongly opposed to any proposal for joint sovereignty or the creation of a Palestinian capital in East Jerusalem.

The vital relationship between Jerusalem and Zionism is expressed most strongly by David Parsons.¹²³⁷ He even berates Jewish Zionists who

¹²³⁶ Lind, op.cit.

¹²³⁷ David Parsons has served as General Counsel of the Christian's Israel Public Action

define Zionism too loosely as simply 'support for a Zionist State', particularly those who considered an alternative location such as Uganda or South America. Parsons insists that it is 'disingenuous to separate the Jewish connection to Jerusalem from Zionism ... and still contend that you are a Zionist.' What remains, he claims, 'is not worthy of the name.'¹²³⁸ Jarvilehto similarly describes the decision of the UN to declare Jerusalem 'occupied territory' as a sign that the UN has been 'polluted with anti-Semitism.'¹²³⁹

Not only do Christian Zionists believe Jerusalem is integral to Zionism, they also believe the city is the place in which, according to Clarence Wagner, 'the blessings and judgements to the world are manifested in physical form. There is blessing for those who see this city as God's appointed city, for ever and for all time, and seek to bless it, pray for its peace, honour its God and honour its people.'¹²⁴⁰ The key, therefore to securing this blessing is to gain international recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Christian Zionists recognise that the most dramatic and symbolic way to achieve this would be to persuade Western governments, and principally the US government, to move their embassies to Jerusalem.

In February 1984, the ICEJ therefore sent a representative, Richard Hellman, to testify before the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in Washington to urge the US to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and recognise the city as the capital of Israel.¹²⁴¹ Jerry Falwell of Moral Majority and the AIPAC lobby also spoke in favour of such a move. Senator Bob Dole later introduced legislation in the American Senate which required the US Embassy to be rebuilt in Jerusalem by 31 May 1999, and authorised \$100 million for 'preliminary' spending.¹²⁴² In October 1995 he stated, 'Israel's capital is not on the table in the peace process, and moving the United States embassy to Jerusalem does nothing to prejudice the outcome of any future

Campaign (CIPAC), the powerful Christian pro-Israel lobby to the US Congress.

¹²³⁸ David Parsons, 'Jerusalem, Thy Years are Determined', Christians and Israel, Essays in Biblical Zionism and on Islamic Fundamentalism, (Jerusalem, International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, 1996), pp46-47.

¹²³⁹ Jarvilehto, op.cit. p58.

¹²⁴⁰ Clarence Wagner, 'Driving the Nations Crazy', Israel Teaching Letter, Bridges for Peace. <http://www.bridgesforpeace.com/publications/teaching/Article-44.html>

¹²⁴¹ Donald Wagner, Anxious, op.cit., p108.

¹²⁴² 'Bill to re-locate the United States Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem', <http://www.usdoj.gov/olc/s770.16.htm>

negotiations.’¹²⁴³ Lamenting the failure of the US President to ratify the Senate decision, Dole commented:

‘Jerusalem is today as it has been for three millennia the heart and soul of the Jewish people. It is also, and should remain forever, the eternal and undivided capital of the State of Israel ... The time has come ... to move beyond letters, expressions of support, and sense of the Congress resolutions. The time has come to enact legislation that will get the job done.’¹²⁴⁴

In 1992, the ICEJ sponsored various receptions marking the 25th anniversary of what they referred to as the ‘Reunification of Jerusalem.’¹²⁴⁵ In 1996, at the International Christian Zionist Congress, this position was reiterated when the 1,500 participants signed a declaration insisting:

‘Because of the sovereign purposes of God for the City, Jerusalem must remain undivided, under Israeli sovereignty, open to all peoples, the capital of Israel only, and all nations should so concur and place their embassies here ... the truths of God are sovereign and it is written that the Land which He promised to His People is not to be partitioned.’¹²⁴⁶

In 1997 the ICEJ also gave support to a full page advert placed in the New York Times entitled, ‘Christians Call for a United Jerusalem.’ It was signed by 10 evangelical leaders including Pat Robertson, chairman of Christian Broadcasting Network and President of the Christian Coalition; Oral Roberts, founder and chancellor of Oral Roberts University; Jerry Falwell, founder of Moral Majority; Ed McAteer, President of the Religious Roundtable; and David Allen Lewis, President of Christians United for Israel:

‘We, the undersigned Christian spiritual leaders, communicating weekly to more than 100 million Christian Americans, are proud to join together in supporting the continued sovereignty of the State of Israel over the holy city of Jerusalem. We support Israel’s efforts to reach reconciliation with its Arab neighbors, but we believe that Jerusalem, or any portion of it, shall not be negotiable in the peace process. Jerusalem must remain undivided as the eternal capital of the Jewish people.’¹²⁴⁷

¹²⁴³ Middle East Realities ‘Lie of the Week’ MiddleEast@aol.com, 01/11/95

¹²⁴⁴ Donald Neff, ‘Congress has been irresponsible on the issue of Jerusalem’, Washington Report, January (1998), pp90-91.

¹²⁴⁵ International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (Jerusalem, ICEJ, 1993), p24.

¹²⁴⁶ ‘International Christian Zionist Congress Proclamation’ International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem. 25-29 February (1996).

¹²⁴⁷ ‘Christians Call for a United Jerusalem’ New York Times, 18 April (1997), <http://www.cdn-friends-icej.ca/united.html>

Readers were invited to 'Join us in our holy mission to ensure that Jerusalem will remain the undivided, eternal capital of Israel.' They claimed, 'The battle for Jerusalem has begun, and it is time for believers in Christ to support our Jewish brethren and the State of Israel. The time for unity with the Jewish people is now.'¹²⁴⁸ In 1998, Hagee insisted that the special status afforded the Jewish people by God superseded the rule of international law:

'A shared Jerusalem? Never! A "shared Jerusalem" means control of the Holy City would be wrested away from the Jewish people and given, at least in part, to the Palestine Liberation Organisation. I say "never" ... because the Word of God says it is God's will for Jerusalem to be under the exclusive control of the Jewish people until Messiah comes ... God doesn't care what the United Nations thinks ... He gave Jerusalem to the nation of Israel, and it is theirs.'¹²⁴⁹

The lobbying by Christian Zionists for the recognition of Jerusalem as the Israeli capital is unrelenting. In 2001, for example, the National Unity Coalition for Israel (NUCFI) published another resolution of solidarity with Israel, acknowledging Jerusalem as the undivided capital of the Jewish State and calling upon the US government to implement the Jerusalem Embassy Act, passed by the US Congress in 1995, to move the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.¹²⁵⁰ Signators included Hal Lindsey, Chuck Missler,¹²⁵¹ Clarence Wagner and Elwood McQuaid.¹²⁵² In 2002, Falwell controversially linked the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre with Israel's exclusive claim to Jerusalem, calling upon his supporters to petition the US President to 'Keep Jerusalem Free.'¹²⁵³ Christian Zionists have therefore been resolute in their efforts to get the international community to recognise Jerusalem as the de facto capital of Israel. Their efforts, so far unsuccessful, have focussed on pressuring successive US Presidents to authorise the transfer of the

¹²⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁴⁹ Hagee, op.cit., p42.

¹²⁵⁰ Resolution of Solidarity with Israel 2001, <http://www.israelunitycoalition.com>

¹²⁵¹ Don Stewart & Chuck Missler, The Coming Temple, (Orange, California, Dart Press, 1991); Chuck Missler, Cosmic Code, (Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, Koinonia House, 1998); Hidden Treasures in the Bible Text, (Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, Koinonia House, 2000); The Book of Revelation, A Commentary, (Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, Koinonia House, 2000); 2002 Prophetic Events Calendar, (Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, Koinonia House, 2001); Red Sky at Morning Strategic Trends Update, (Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, Koinonia House, 2002); <http://www.khouse.org>

¹²⁵² Elwood McQuaid, It is No Dream, Bible Prophecy: Face or Fiction?, (Bellmawr, New Jersey, Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, 1978).

American embassy to Jerusalem, realising that such a move would seal Israel's claim to the city as their undivided, eternal capital. However, even more critical to a Christian Zionist reading of prophecy is the necessity for the Jewish Temple to be rebuilt.

5. The Temple : Identifying with Religious Zionism

Dispensational Christian Zionists, in particular, believe the Jewish Temple must be rebuilt because their futurist eschatology leads them to believe that the anti-Christ will desecrate it just prior to the return of Christ. Brickner claims that the preparations for rebuilding the Temple began in 1967 with the capture of the Old City of Jerusalem.¹²⁵⁴ Lindsey is equally sure that, 'right now, as you read this, preparations are being made to rebuild the Third Temple.'¹²⁵⁵ Contemporary Christian Zionists have been active in assisting Jewish organisations dedicated to rebuilding the Jewish Temple by publicizing the Temple Mount organisations; searching for the Temple site; facilitating the building programme; breeding the red heifers and funding the Treasury. Given the number of books published recently by Christian Zionists about the Temple, it appears to be something of a growth industry.¹²⁵⁶

5.1 Publicising the Temple Mount Movement

Randall Price is the leading dispensational expert on the imminent plans to rebuild the Jewish Temple. In his 735 page The Coming Last Days Temple, he provides comprehensive details and addresses of all the Jewish

¹²⁵³ Jerry Falwell Ministries, 'Keep Jerusalem Free Petition,' <http://falwell.com/>

¹²⁵⁴ Brickner, Future, op.cit., p137.

¹²⁵⁵ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p156; Final, op.cit., p103.

¹²⁵⁶ In his 732 page analysis of the future Jewish Temple, Randall Price lists over 40 books written in the last 30 years compared with only two written in the 19th Century. The most recent include Thomas Ice & Randall Price, Ready to Rebuild, The Imminent Plan to Rebuild the Last Days Temple, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1992); Randall Price, The Coming Last Days Temple, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1999); Yisrael Ariel, The Odyssey of the Third Temple, translated and adapted by Chaim Richman, (Jerusalem, G. Israel Publications, 1993); Bradley J. Chance, Jerusalem, the Temple and the New Age in Luke-Acts, (Macon, GA, Mercer University Press, 1988); Ernest L. Martin, The Place of the New Third Temple, (Portland, Oregon, Associates for Scriptural Knowledge, 1994); Don Stewart & Chuck Missler, The Coming Temple, (Orange, California, Dart Press, 1991).

organisations involved in facilitating the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple.¹²⁵⁷ Together with Thomas Ice, their earlier book, Ready to Rebuild¹²⁵⁸ demonstrates that this is not a theoretical or fringe subject but one in which significant numbers of Christians, together with religious Jews, are already actively participating in the firm conviction that the Temple will be rebuilt very soon. While Jews for Jesus insist that they do not endorse the activities of any particular Jewish group committed to rebuilding the Jewish Temple, they nevertheless provide information on, and direct Internet links to, eight Jewish organisations some of which have been implicated in attempts to seize the Temple Mount, destroy the Al Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock, rebuild the Jewish Temple and re-institute Temple worship, priesthood and sacrifices. These include the Temple Institute and Temple Mount Faithful.¹²⁵⁹ Gershon Salomon is the controversial figurehead of the movement and founder of The Temple Faithful. Zhava Glaser, of Jews for Jesus, praises Salomon for his courage to talk about 'the most important subject in the Jewish religion.'

'His credentials as an Israeli patriot are impeccable, beginning at age eleven when he was arrested by the British authorities for putting up Zionist posters during their occupation of Israel. He has stood up for what he believes to be true ever since ... one must take Salomon seriously. Nine thousand people are on his "Temple Mount Faithful" membership list.'¹²⁶⁰

Speaking as a guest of the ICEJ, at the Christian Zionist Congress in 1998, Salomon insisted:

'The mission of the present generation is to liberate the Temple Mount and to remove - I repeat, to remove - the defiling abomination there ... the Jewish people will not be stopped at the gates leading to the Temple Mount ... We will fly our Israeli flag over the Temple Mount, which will be minus its Dome of the Rock and its mosques and will have only our Israeli flag and our Temple. This is what our generation must accomplish.'¹²⁶¹

¹²⁵⁷ Randall Price, The Coming Last Days Temple, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1999), pp616-644; Randall Price, 'Time for a Temple? Jewish Plans to Rebuild the Temple.' Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry <http://www.foigm.org/img/timetemp.htm>

¹²⁵⁸ Thomas Ice & Randall Price, Ready to Rebuild. The Imminent Plan to Rebuild the Last Days Temple, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1992).

¹²⁵⁹ Rich Robinson, 'Israeli Groups Involved in Third Temple Activities' Jews for Jesus Newsletter 10, (1993), <http://www.jewsforjesus.org>

¹²⁶⁰ Zhava Glaser, 'Today's Rituals: Reminders or Replacements' Issues, 8, 3.

¹²⁶¹ Nadav Shragai, 'Dreaming of a Third Temple', Ha'aretz, 17 September (1998), p3, cited in Price, Coming, op.cit., p417.

Sam Kiley writing in The Times, however, gives another perspective. He claims Salomon represents the 'almost acceptable face of millennial cults.' In an interview Salomon insisted that the Islamic shrine must be destroyed:

'The Israeli Government must do it. We must have a war. There will be many nations against us but God will be our general. I am sure this is a test, that God is expecting us to move the Dome with no fear from other nations. The Messiah will not come by himself; we should bring Him by fighting.'¹²⁶²

Both the ICEJ and the ICZC promote Salomon's views.¹²⁶³ Van der Hoeven further speculates:

'Satan, who knows to always take seriously the things God takes seriously, kept his grip on the Temple Mount for hundreds of years, until he was almost unseated in the 1967 Six-Day War. Thanks to the misguided, if generous, spirit of the victorious Israelis, Islam was permitted to hold sway over who would worship on the Mount ... Satan is moving to entrench his position on God's holy hill. The "political" struggle over Jerusalem has really never had anything to do with who heads up which municipality or who oversees the city's housing, parks or public buildings or even who controls the old city. At the heart of the battle lies this small piece of real estate called Mount Moriah, Mount Zion, the Temple Mount.'¹²⁶⁴

According to Grace Halsell, between 1967 and 1990 there have been over 100 armed assaults on the Haram Al-Sharif by Jewish militants, often led by rabbis. She regrets that 'in no instance has any Israeli Prime Minister or the chief Sephardic rabbi or the chief Ashkenazi rabbi criticized these assaults.'¹²⁶⁵ However, even if Jewish and Christian Zionists are successful in destroying the Al Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock, one of the unresolved difficulties they would still face is deciding where to rebuild the Jewish Temple.

¹²⁶² Sam Kiley, 'The righteous will survive and the rest will perish' The Times, 13 December (1999), p39.

¹²⁶³ 'The Hanukkah Event of the Temple Mount Faithful on the Temple Mount, Jerusalem' ICEJ, 27 December (2000) <http://www.cdn-friends-icej.ca/hanukkah.html>; Jan Willem van der Hoeven, 'About the ICZC' <http://www.israelmybeloved.com/about/organization.htm>

¹²⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁶⁵ Grace Halsell, 'The Hidden Hand of the Temple Mount Faithful' The Washington Report, January (1991), p8.

5.2 Searching for the Temple Site

It is critical to religious Zionists that any future Temple is built on the same site as the Temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel and Herod. There appears to have been continuity between them with each enclosing the protrusion of Mount Moriah, also known as the Foundation Stone, within the Holy of Holies. There are three main theories advocated by historians and archaeologists as to the exact site of the earlier temples.¹²⁶⁶ The most commonly held, with both traditional support as well as a consensus among Israeli archaeologists today, is that the Temple stood on the site of the Dome of the Rock.

In the 1970s, Lindsey insisted the Jewish Temple would have to be built in place of the Dome of the Rock. 'There is one major problem barring the construction of a third Temple. That obstacle is the second holiest place of the Muslim faith, the Dome of the Rock. This is believed to be built squarely in the middle of the old Temple site. Obstacle or no obstacle, it is certain that the Temple will be rebuilt. Prophecy demands it.'¹²⁶⁷ Lindsey appeared to know the exact location of the Temple structure. 'Imagine my emotions as I stood under a sign at the Wall which read in Hebrew: 'Holy of Holies, 10 Metres', with an arrow pointing towards a spot thirty feet behind the existing Wall in the direction of the Dome of the Rock!'¹²⁶⁸ By 1983, Lindsey had changed his mind however. Now favouring the Northern Theory, Lindsey believed this discovery, 'has accelerated the countdown to the events that will bring the Messiah Jesus back to earth.' This was because, 'the predicted Third Temple can now be built without disturbing the Dome of the Rock ... the Temple and its immediate guard wall could be rebuilt and still be twenty-six meters away from the Dome of the Rock.'¹²⁶⁹ Having discovered the true site of the Herodian Temple, Lindsey proceeded to find scriptural verification for

¹²⁶⁶ These are the Northern Theory, the Southern Theory and the Central Theory. See discussion in Price, Coming, op.cit., pp337-342; Tuvia Sagiv, The Hidden Secrets of the Temple Mount, (Tel Aviv, 1993); <http://www.Templemount.org/tempmt.html>; Asher Kaufmann, 'Where the Ancient Temple of Jerusalem Stood', Biblical Archaeology Review 9, 2 (1983) pp40-59; Leen Ritmeyer, The Temple of Herod, (Harrogate, England, Ritmeyer Architectural Design, 1993); The Temple and the Rock, (Harrogate, England, Ritmeyer Architectural Design, 1996), pp38-48.

¹²⁶⁷ Lindsey, Late, op.cit., pp56-58. Lindsey is in error on this point. The Dome of the Rock is the third most holy shrine of Islam after Mecca and Medina.

¹²⁶⁸ Lindsey, There's, op.cit., p163.

¹²⁶⁹ Lindsey, Israel, op.cit., p29.

this new location based on clues as to its dimensions in Revelation 11. 'We are literally in the very last days of the Church Age. The Temple will be rebuilt soon!'¹²⁷⁰ Brickner also favours the claims made by Randall Price that the Jewish Temple could actually be rebuilt alongside the Dome of the Rock, although he concedes in something of an understatement, 'it remains a sensitive issue to say the least.'¹²⁷¹ To suggest that a Jewish temple could be erected next to the Dome of the Rock, is rather naïve, as is Lindsey's claim that a new Jewish Temple would enhance Israel's tourism revenue and become 'the greatest tourist attraction in the world.'¹²⁷² It is inconceivable that the Muslim authorities would countenance any Jewish construction within the confines of the Haram Al-Sharif. In any case, most orthodox Jews remain convinced that the Dome of the Rock is an abomination and must be removed before the Temple can be rebuilt.¹²⁷³

5.3 Facilitating the Building Programme

In order to sustain a fully functioning Temple rather than simply creates a tourist attraction or museum, it is also necessary to identify, train and consecrate priests to serve in the Temple. The dilemma facing prospective priests is how to become ritually pure before they can offer sacrifices for others. According to the Book of Numbers, the ashes of a pure unblemished red heifer, itself previously offered by a ritually pure priest, must be mixed with water and sprinkled on both them and the Temple furniture. With the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD the ashes used in the ceremony were lost and the Jews of the Diaspora have therefore been perpetually unclean ever since. The search for the ashes of the last red heifer have so far proved unsuccessful. In 1998, however, Clyde Lott, a Pentecostal Mississippi rancher, formed Canaan Land Restoration of Israel, Inc. for the purpose of raising livestock suitable for Temple sacrifice.¹²⁷⁴ According to Newsweek, in

¹²⁷⁰ Ibid., p30.

¹²⁷¹ Brickner, Future, op.cit., p61.

¹²⁷² Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p163.

¹²⁷³ Price, Coming, op.cit., p346.

¹²⁷⁴ Randall Price incorrectly attributes this story to Time when it actually appeared in Newsweek. He also misspells one of the contributor's names. Price, Coming, op.cit., p375. 'Red Heifers' New York Times, 27 December (1998), cited in Halsell, Forcing, p65.

1997, the first red heifer for 2000 years was born at the Kfar Hassidim kibbutz near Haifa and named 'Melody'.¹²⁷⁵ Unfortunately she eventually grew white hairs on her tail and udder. Undaunted, Chaim Richman, an Orthodox rabbi and Clyde Lott, the Pentecostal cattleman, have teamed up to breed red heifers in the Jordan Valley, in the hope of saving Israel's cattle industry as well as producing a perfect specimen for sacrifice.¹²⁷⁶

The design and construction work, furnishings and utensils, the training of priests and breeding of sacrifices all require funds and in large measure, like the red heifer, these are being provided by Christian Zionists. The Jerusalem Temple Foundation was founded by Stanley Goldfoot, a former terrorist member of the Stern Gang, together with Terry Reisenhoover and several other American evangelicals to facilitate the rebuilding of the Temple.¹²⁷⁷ According to Grace Halsell, Goldfoot raises up to \$100 million a year for the Jerusalem Temple Foundation through American Christian TV and radio stations and evangelical churches,¹²⁷⁸ including Chuck Smith's Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California.¹²⁷⁹ Goldfoot has also acknowledged receiving funds from the ICEJ, Jerusalem. Jan Willem van der Hoeven admitted that 'when supporters volunteer to give money for building a Temple, he directs them to Goldfoot.' The ICEJ also sells an audio tape about

'Shortly after this Rev. Lott (who is also a cattleman by trade) came to possess a red heifer that met all the biblical qualifications of Numbers chapter 19. Since that historic time in, November 11, 1994 God has miraculously unveiled His divine plan for the restoration of Israel, to the Church. The Holy Ghost has worked during this time to reveal to Apostolic ministers and laymen the need to unify their efforts in order to see this project move forward, both in the Spirit and in the natural. August 11, 1998 Israel is expecting to receive from Canaan Land Restoration, 500 head of registered Red Angus Heifers.' Joe Atkins, 'Biblical mystery of the red heifer affects farmer in Mississippi' The Daily Mississippian, 23 July (1998); Ethan Bronner, 'Portent in a Pasture? Appearance of Rare Heifer in Israel Spurs Hopes, Fears', The Boston Globe, Sunday, April 6, (1997), pp1, 22.

¹²⁷⁵ Kendall Hamilton, Joseph Contreras & Mark Dennis, 'The Strange Case of Israel's Red Heifer,' Newsweek, May 19, (1997).

¹²⁷⁶ Jeremy Shere, 'A Very Holy Cow' Jerusalem Post, May 25, (1997).

¹²⁷⁷ Louis Rapoport, 'Slouching towards Armageddon: Links with Evangelicals' Jerusalem Post International Edition, June 17-24, (1984); Halsell, Forcing, op.cit., p68. As a member of the Stern Gang and also Irgun, Goldfoot was responsible for planting the bomb at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem on 22nd July 1946 which killed 100 British soldiers and officials. In 1948 he was also convicted and jailed by an Israeli court for the murder of UN envoy Count Bernadotte.

¹²⁷⁸ Halsell, Prophecy, op.cit., p106.

¹²⁷⁹ Halsell, Forcing, op.cit., pp63-73.

plans to construct a Jewish Temple on Haram Al-Sharif.¹²⁸⁰ Pat Robertson's 700 Club and Christian Broadcasting Network as well as the ICEJ have also assisted in fund raising for Gershon Salomon's Temple Mount Faithful.¹²⁸¹

Professor Gordon Welty of Wright State University, Ohio, a sociologist and anthropologist, explains the apparent contradiction of evangelical Christians supporting Jewish terrorists:

'Their power is to keep inconsistencies in airtight compartments, so that they themselves never recognize these inconsistencies ... If the money a muscular Christian donates to the Jewish terrorists buys the dynamite that destroys the mosque, the muscular Christian will say simply, "It was an act of God."'¹²⁸²

As Lawrence Wright has also observed, 'Jewish longing for the Temple, Christian hopes for the Rapture, and Muslim paranoia about the destruction of the mosques [are being] stirred to an apocalyptic boil.'¹²⁸³ The implacable hostility Christian Zionists show towards any compromise over the competing claims to the Land, the status of Jerusalem or plans to rebuild the Jewish Temple, combined with their formidable influence in US Middle East policy makes for an ominous future, given the inherent pessimism of their eschatology.

6. The Future : Opposing Peace and Hastening Armageddon

Christian Zionism finds its consummation in the future hope of all Israel restored to their land and to their Lord, bringing blessing to the whole world. While Britain was the principal sponsor and protector of Zionism in the 19th Century, the United States has fulfilled the role of benefactor and guardian in the 20th Century. While the United Nations is invariably viewed with mistrust, the special relationship between America and Israel ensures their mutual survival against global terrorism.¹²⁸⁴ Antipathy for Arabs generally has led to the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians and the demonisation of Islam, while Arab leaders such as Yasser Arafat and Saddam Hussein are cast for the role of

¹²⁸⁰ Ibid., p98.

¹²⁸¹ Jay Gary, 'The Temple Time Bomb' Presence Magazine, <http://www.christianity.com/partner>

¹²⁸² Halsell, Forcing, op.cit., p115.

¹²⁸³ Lawrence Wright, 'Forcing the End', Frontline, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/apocalypse/readings/forcing.html>

anti-Christ.¹²⁸⁵ In such a dualistic and polarized world, Christian Zionists are at best sceptical and at worst hostile toward the Middle East peace process.

6.1 The US-Israeli Alliance

While Christian Zionists in general are committed to standing with Israel, there is a particularly close relationship between Israel and America. Jerry Falwell offers a simple explanation. God has been kind to America because 'America had been kind to the Jew.'¹²⁸⁶ Mike Evans, founder and President of Lovers of Israel Inc. is representative of those who find a biblical basis for the special relationship between Israel and America:

'Only one nation, Israel, stands between ... terrorist aggression and the complete decline of the United States as a democratic world power ... Surely demonic pressure will endeavour to encourage her to betray Israel ... Israel is the key to America's survival ... As we stand with Israel, I believe we shall see God perform a mighty work in our day. God is going to bless America and Israel as well ... If Israel falls, the United States can no longer remain a democracy ... Arab money is being used to control and influence major US Corporations, making it economically more and more difficult for the United States to stand against world terrorism.'¹²⁸⁷

For Christian Zionists such as Jerry Falwell and Mike Evans, America is seen as the great redeemer, her super-power role in the world predicted in scripture¹²⁸⁸ and providentially ordained.¹²⁸⁹ The two nations of America and Israel are like Siamese twins, linked not only by common self interest but more significantly by similar religious foundations.

Senator Bob Dole summarises this special relationship succinctly: 'American-Israeli friendship is no accident. It is a product of our shared values. We are both democracies. We are both pioneer states. We have both

¹²⁸⁴ Merrill Simon, Jerry Falwell and the Jews, (Middle Village, New York, Jonathan David, 1984), pp63-64.

¹²⁸⁵ Charles Dyer, The Rise of Babylon, (Wheaton, Tyndale, 1991).

¹²⁸⁶ Cited in Halsell, Forcing, op.cit., p100.

¹²⁸⁷ Mike Evans, Israel, America's Key to Survival, (Plainfield, New Jersey, Haven Books, 1980), back page, xv.

¹²⁸⁸ Noah Hutchings, U.S. in Prophecy, (Oklahoma City, Hearthstone Publishing, 2000); Arno Froese, Terror in America, Understanding the Tragedy, (West Columbia, Olive Press, 2001); Mark Hitchcock, Is America in Prophecy? (Portland, Oregon, Multnomah, 2002); Hal Lindsey, Where is America in Prophecy? video (Murrieta, California, Hal Lindsey Ministries, 2001).

¹²⁸⁹ Michael Lienesch, Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right, (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, University of North Carolina, 1993), p197.

opened our doors to the oppressed. We have both shown a passion for freedom and we have gone to war to protect it.¹²⁹⁰ The Ruether's warn of the danger of this kind of logic for its, 'dualistic, Manichaeic view of global politics. America and Israel together against an evil world.'¹²⁹¹ The special relationship dispensationalists accord to Israel underpins this conviction that Israel and 'Christian' America will stand together. They are perceived to be pitted against an evil world dominated by Communist and Islamic totalitarian regimes antithetical to the Judeo-Christian democratic values of America and Israel.¹²⁹²

6.2 Antipathy Toward Arabs

Christian Zionists, while lovers of Israel, rarely show the same feelings toward Arabs, indeed their antipathy is often in inverse proportion to their empathy for Israel. Anti-Arab prejudices and Orientalist stereotypes are common in their writings.¹²⁹³ For the Orientalist the West is seen as liberal, peaceful, rational and capable of embracing 'real' values, whereas the Middle East is not. The perceptions of the Revd. John Holmes illustrate this. Following a visit to Palestine in 1929 he wrote with admiration about the Jewish pioneer settlers he had encountered:

'As I met and talked with these toilers on the land, I could think of nothing but the early English settlers who came to the bleak shores of Massachusetts, and there amid winter's cold in an untilled soil, among an unfriendly native population, laid firm and sure the foundations of our American Republic. For this reason I was not surprised later, when I read Josiah Wedgwood's "The Seventh Dominion" to find this distinguished Gentile Zionist of Britain speaking of these Jewish pioneers as "the Pilgrim Fathers of Palestine". Here is the same heroism dedicated to the same ends ... It is obvious that the native Arabs while no less stubborn and savage than the American Indians, cannot be removed from the scene.'¹²⁹⁴

¹²⁹⁰ Bob Dole, Near East Report 21, 20, 18 May (1977), cited in Sharif, op.cit., p136.

¹²⁹¹ Rosemary Ruether & Herman J. Ruether, The Wrath of Jonah, The Crisis of Religious Nationalism in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, (San Francisco, Harper, 1989), p176.

¹²⁹² Simon, op.cit., pp71-72.

¹²⁹³ Edward Said, Orientalism, (New York, Vintage, 1978); Ramon Bennett, Philistine, The Great Deception, (Jerusalem, Arm of Salvation, 1995).

¹²⁹⁴ John Haynes Holmes, Palestine Today and Tomorrow: A Gentile's Survey of Zionism, (New York, Macmillan, 1929), pp89, 248, cited in Sharif, Non-Jewish, op.cit., p135.

Ramon Bennett illustrates how such prejudices remain common today describing the modern Arab nations as 'barbarous'.¹²⁹⁵ 'The customs of hospitality and generosity have changed little in 4,000 years,' he claims, 'nor have the customs of raiding (thieving, rustling), saving face or savagery.'¹²⁹⁶ Citing John Laffin, Bennett argues that the Arab 'is neither a vicious nor, usually, a calculating liar but a natural one.'¹²⁹⁷ Kenneth Cragg concurs with Edward Said's criticism of Orientalism,¹²⁹⁸ for its 'crude stereotype imaging of the East' and for being:

'... a gross form of Western superiority complex, expressed in a literature and a scholarship that imposed its own false portrayal on the East and refused to care sensitively for the East's own evaluation of itself. By distortion it had its own way with its eastern versions and made these the instrument of control and, indeed, of denigration ... 19th and 20th Century Western Orientalism is thus found uniformly culpable, and a conniver with misrepresentation.'¹²⁹⁹

With the rise of Arab nationalism and especially Palestinian aspirations toward self determination, the polemic against Arabs has grown. Comparisons between Hitler and the Arabs are now frequent in the writings of contemporary Christian Zionists.¹³⁰⁰ Van der Hoeven of the ICEJ is typical. 'Just as there was a definite ideology behind the hatred and atrocities of Hitler and the Nazis, there is one behind the hatred and wars by the Arabs against the Jews and people of Israel.'¹³⁰¹ Citing Joseph Gunther and Samuel Katz, van der Hoeven claims:

'The greatest contemporary hero (in the Arab world) is Hitler ... Hitler's Mein Kampf is still required reading in various Arab capitals and universities ... The only reason that the Arabs have not yet done to the Israeli Jews what Hitler did to their forefathers in Europe is that they have thus far lacked the military means and weapons of mass destruction which were at Hitler's disposal, to do so. Had there not been an Israeli Defence Force to defend the remnant of European Jewry that immigrated to Israel, the Arabs would have gladly fulfilled

¹²⁹⁵ Bennett, op.cit., p23.

¹²⁹⁶ Ibid., p21.

¹²⁹⁷ Ibid., p23; John Laffin, The Arab Mind, (London, Cassell, 1975), p70.

¹²⁹⁸ Said, op.cit.

¹²⁹⁹ Kenneth Cragg, The Arab Christian, A History in the Middle East, (London, Mowbray, 1992), p297.

¹³⁰⁰ Jan Willem van der Hoeven, Babylon or Jerusalem?, (Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, Destiny Image Publishers, 1993), pp132-133; Bennett, Philistine, op.cit., p134.

¹³⁰¹ van der Hoeven, Ibid., pp132-133.

Hitler's dream a long time ago by finishing off those of the Jews the Nazi megalomaniac had left alive.'¹³⁰²

Hal Lindsey also insists, 'Long ago the psalmist predicted the final mad attempt of the confederated Arab armies to destroy the nation of Israel ... The Palestinians are determined to trouble the world until they repossess what they feel is their land.'¹³⁰³ Franklin Graham, President of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, made similar but unguarded remarks in a newspaper interview in 2000: 'The Arabs will not be happy until every Jew is dead. They hate the State of Israel. They all hate the Jews. God gave the land to the Jews. The Arabs will never accept that.'¹³⁰⁴

Kelvin Crombie's history of CMJ in Israel, entitled For the Love of Zion, Christian Witness and the Restoration of Israel, has also aroused a good deal of criticism among leading Palestinian Christians. One Episcopal leader in Jerusalem claimed:

'I found reading it that it was written by a person who really harbours resentment against the Arabs and against Palestinian Christians ... it reflects his prejudice, his resentment, his deep dislike of the local Christians as if they really have nothing to say. Anything that Jews do somehow is always put in the right light and anything Arabs would do is somehow always judged as being wrong.'¹³⁰⁵

Hatred of Arabs is personified in attitudes toward Yasser Arafat. The ICEJ's antipathy toward Arafat is illustrated, for example, by their Middle East Intelligence Digest. The June 1997 edition included an article entitled, 'Evil that will not die: Arafat shares Hitler's determination to wipe out the Jews.'¹³⁰⁶

In February 1999, Arafat was invited to attend the 47th annual Congress-sponsored National Prayer Breakfast in Washington. The breakfast is normally attended each year by more than 3,000 political and religious leaders and his invitation generated considerable controversy. For example, the Traditional Values Coalition, founded by Pat Robertson and representing

¹³⁰² Jan Willem van der Hoeven, 'Hitler and the Arabs' The Freeman Centre, (2001). http://www.freeman.org/m_online/apr01/hoeven.htm

¹³⁰³ Lindsey, Israel and the Last Days, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1983), pp38-39.

¹³⁰⁴ Charlotte Observer, 16th October (2000).

¹³⁰⁵ Based on an interview with a senior Palestinian clergyman. These interviews are transcribed, but to retain confidentiality they are annotated by date and number (Interview 1993:3.12).

¹³⁰⁶ 'Evil that will not Die', Middle East Intelligence Digest, ICEJ, June (1997), <http://www.cdn-friends-icej.ca/medigest/june97/evil.html>

40,000 churches, urged congressmen to boycott the breakfast. Randy Tate, executive director of the Christian Coalition described Arafat as an 'unrepentant terrorist.'¹³⁰⁷ Other organizations which boycotted the breakfast included James Dobson's Focus on the Family, the National Unity Coalition for Israel and the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem. The ICEJ said that attending the breakfast with Arafat would be 'like praying with Satan himself.'¹³⁰⁸ Despite considerable pressure from pro-Israeli groups the invitation was not withdrawn. It was left to the White House press secretary, Joe Lockhart, to defend the invitation. He lamented, 'it's done every year in the spirit of reconciliation. And it's unfortunate that there are some who don't fully understand the spirit of reconciliation and inclusion.'¹³⁰⁹

Michael Lind observes that while anti-Semitism is taboo in America, 'the taboo against anti-Arab bigotry, however, is weak.' He notes parallels between the racist attitudes toward Blacks and Arabs especially in the Deep South Bible Belt. Lind compares a Jewish editor who insisted Israel should have given the rest of the Palestinians to Jordan in 1967 with 'an elderly white southerner who once told me, "We should have left them all in Africa."'

'The parallel can be extended. After 1830, the defence of slavery and later segregation in the old south led white southerners to abandon the liberal idealism of the founding era in favour of harsh racism and a siege mentality. Since 1967, the need to justify the rule of Israel over a conquered helot population has produced a similar shift from humane idealism to unapologetic tribalism in parts of the diaspora, as well as in Israel. It is perhaps no coincidence that the most important non-Jewish supporters of Israel in the US today are found in the deep south among descendants of the segregationist Dixiecrats.'¹³¹⁰

Antipathy for Arabs generally is also often associated, in particular, with racist attitudes toward Palestinians.

6.3 The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine

Frequently, defending Israeli security leads Christian Zionists to deny Palestinians the same basic human rights. Neil Cohen, vicar of Christ Church,

¹³⁰⁷ Christian Daily News, 4 February, (1999)
<http://www.christiannews.org/archives/1999/20499/news/full.html>

¹³⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹³¹⁰ Lind., op.cit.

Jerusalem, for example, argues that equality or partnership between Jews and Arabs in Israel or the Occupied Territories is untenable because God gave the land to the Jewish people. 'We live in an age of political correctness which claims we live in a world where all people have equal rights. I don't agree with that because I don't think it squares with the biblical record ... the search for peace in the Middle East, laudable though it is, is a wild goose chase.'¹³¹¹ Rob Richards of CMJ similarly justifies Israel's policy of segregation by designating Palestinians as 'alien' residents in Eretz Israel, to be respected but not entitled to the same status or equal rights, as the Jews. 'Palestinians and Arabs who have made Israel their home come under that biblical word "alien."¹³¹² Brickner also uses the term 'sojourner' to describe the status of Palestinians in Eretz Israel,¹³¹³ while van der Hoeven describes as 'sick' the propaganda that 'Jews displaced Arab natives in Palestine'.¹³¹⁴ Such arguments ignore the fact that most Palestinians (at least those over the age of 55) did not choose to 'make their home in Israel' when the State of Israel was unilaterally imposed upon them in 1948. Indeed, many have been displaced twice, in 1948 and 1967. Today there are over 3.5 million Palestinians registered as refugees by the United Nations and constitute 25% of all refugees in the world.

Some like Dave Hunt go much further, questioning the very existence of Palestinians. He is typical of others like Ramon Bennett who equate Palestinians with the ancient Philistines and use the term Palestinian in an entirely pejorative sense:¹³¹⁵

'Central to the Middle East conflict today is the issue of the so-called Palestinian people ... Palestinians? There never was a Palestinian people, nation, language, culture, or religion. The claim of descent from a Palestinian people who lived for thousands of years in a land called Palestine is a hoax! That land was Canaan, inhabited by Canaanites, whom God destroyed because of their wickedness. Canaan became the land of Israel given by God to His people. Those who today call themselves Palestinians are Arabs by birth, language,

¹³¹¹ Neil Cohen, Paper delivered to the Guildford Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship, St John's, Woking, Surrey, 18th March (1997).

¹³¹² Rob Richards, Has God Finished with Israel? (Crowborough, Monarch/Olive Press, 1994), p159.

¹³¹³ Brickner, Don't, op.cit.

¹³¹⁴ van der Hoeven, 'Hitler', op.cit.

¹³¹⁵ Bennett, Philistine, op.cit.

and culture, and are close relatives to Arabs in surrounding countries from whence most of them came, attracted by Israel's prosperity.'¹³¹⁶

Hunt's logic could presumably be used to challenge the right to self determination for citizens of the United States or indeed of dozens of European and Middle East nations founded in the 20th Century.

Dr Thomas McCall of Zola Levitt Ministries suggests Palestinians are a less advanced race to the Jews. Referring to the limited Palestinian autonomy in Jericho he observes: 'I'm afraid the casino is an example of what the Palestinians do with the land when they acquire it. They are not an advanced culture, and they have never founded an indigenous economy. As a matter of fact, they are dependent on Israel for their livelihood.'¹³¹⁷ Nazi treatment of the Jews illustrates how easily the denigration of an 'inferior' people can lead to the denial of their human rights and the rationalization for their removal or eradication.

Jews for Jesus, for example, justify Israel's use of military force to achieve and maintain control of the Occupied Territories. Comparing the present Israeli occupation with Joshua's conquest of Canaan, they argue, 'In Moses' time the sons of Jacob did not traipse into the land of Canaan and find a welcoming committee eager to greet them and congratulate them upon their arrival. God commanded that they take Canaan by force.' They claim the same principle applies today. 'There may be some who think that God has learned some new lessons since ancient times, but to our knowledge, God does not change. It is entirely possible that once again he might move Israel to resort to force.'¹³¹⁸

Dick Armey, the Republican Senate leader, made ground breaking news by justifying the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from the Occupied Territories. In an interview with Chris Matthews on CNBC on May 1st 2002, Armey stated that:

'Most of the people who now populate Israel were transported from all over the world to that land and they made it their home. The Palestinians can do the same and we are perfectly content to work with

¹³¹⁶ Dave Hunt, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem', The Berean Call, September (2000).
<http://www.thebereancall.org/newsletters/sep00.htm>

¹³¹⁷ Thomas McCall, 'Gershon Salomon & the Temple Mount Faithful: An Interview' Levitt Letter, Zola Levitt Ministries, July, (1977).

¹³¹⁸ 'zionism.htm' Jews for Jesus FAQ, <http://www.jewsforjesus.org>

the Palestinians in doing that. We are not willing to sacrifice Israel for the notion of a Palestinian homeland ... I'm content to have Israel grab the entire West Bank ... There are many Arab nations that have many hundreds of thousands of acres of land, soil, and property and opportunity to create a Palestinian State.¹³¹⁹

Matthews gave Armey several opportunities to clarify that he was not advocating the ethnic cleansing of all Palestinians from the West Bank, but Armey was unrepentant. When asked, 'Have you ever told George Bush, the President from your home State of Texas, that you think the Palestinians should get up and go and leave Palestine and that's the solution?', Armey replied, 'I'm probably telling him that right now ... I am content to have Israel occupy that land that it now occupies and to have those people who have been aggressors against Israel retired to some other arena.'¹³²⁰ Armey's view that Palestinians should be 'retired' is only the latest in a series of calls in the mainstream US and UK media for the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from the Occupied Territories.¹³²¹

Responding to claims that the autonomous Palestinian areas are too small, Tony Higton asserted, 'we must remember that Jordan is a Palestinian area too,' since it was originally part of pre 1948 mandate Palestine.¹³²² The implication is clear, there is room for Palestinians on the east side of the River Jordan but not in Eretz Israel.

While such racist attitudes among Christian Zionists toward Arabs are common, as are the stereotypes that Palestinians are terrorists and should find a home in Jordan, it is more especially Muslims who are demonised.

¹³¹⁹ Dick Armey, 'Hardball with Chris Matthews', CNBC, 1st May (2002), cited in 'Republican Party Leader calls for Ethnic Cleansing of Palestinians on Prime Time Talk Show' The Electronic Intifada,

<http://electronicintifada.net/actionitems/020502dickarmey.html>

See also 'Rep. Dick Armey calls for Ethnic Cleansing of Palestinians' Counterpunch edited by Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair, <http://www.counterpunch.org/armey0502.html>. Dick Armey and his family are members of Lewisville Bible Church, Lewisville, Texas.

¹³²⁰ Ibid.

¹³²¹ Charles Krauthammer, 'Mideast Violence: The Only Way Out', Washington Post, 15 May (2001); Emmanuel A. Winston writing in USA Today called for the 'resettling the Palestinians in Jordan' USA Today, 22 February (2002); John Derbyshire, 'Why don't I care about the Palestinians?', National Review, 9 May (2002); Clarence Wagner, 'Apples for Apples, Osama Bin Laden and Yasser Arafat', Dispatch from Jerusalem, May (2002), p1, 6, 17.

¹³²² Tony Higton, 'Beware of anti-Israel Propaganda' The Church of England Newspaper, 10 November (2000), p16.

6.4 Demonising Islam

Donald Bridge was for some while Warden of the Garden Tomb, a focal point for evangelical pilgrims in Jerusalem. His views are illustrative of other Christian Zionist authors. In his guide book, Travelling Through the Promised Land,¹³²³ Bridge repeatedly caricatures and slanders Muslims. In describing the significance of Jerusalem to the three monotheistic faiths he writes, 'Jews worldwide mark their calendars with events that took place here. Muslims worldwide are eager to engage in holy wars here.'¹³²⁴ When describing the Temple Mount, Bridge writes, 'Arab feeling soon runs high here, and is expressed in anti-Christian and anti-Jewish frenzy. Mullahs shouting over the minarets' loudspeakers can turn a congregation into a rampaging mob within minutes.'¹³²⁵ On a walk through the Old City of Jerusalem he contrasts the Muslim and Jewish Quarters:

'The Jewish Quarter basked in golden sunshine ... Take a few steps out of the Jewish into the Arab Quarter and the contrast is dramatic. It is more colourful, more noisy, more crowded, more dirty. The sounds and smells are totally different. The (to us) alien chant, part moan, part yell, part gargle echoes hauntingly from a dozen minarets ... Arab head-dresses splash the heaving crowds with black and white or red check, and about one in every fifteen looks uncomfortably like Yasser Arafat.'¹³²⁶

Besides erroneously describing the Muslim Quarter as Arab, (since all of the Old City is designated Arab in international law), the book would have probably been labelled anti-Semitic had Bridge actually written, 'uncomfortably like Menachem Begin,' or 'Yitzhak Shamir'.

Anti-Arab and Islamophobic sentiments have become even more widely tolerated since 11th September 2001. For example, numerous dispensational authors have written about America's war against Islamic terrorism following the tragedy.¹³²⁷ Lindsey's antipathy is evident when he

¹³²³ Donald Bridge, Travelling Through the Promised Land, (London, Christian Focus, 1998).

¹³²⁴ Ibid., pp55-56.

¹³²⁵ Ibid., p70.

¹³²⁶ Ibid., p60.

¹³²⁷ See John Hagee, Attack on America, (Nashville, Nelson, 2001); Grant R. Jeffrey, War on Terror, Unfolding Bible Prophecy, (Toronto, Frontier Research, 2002); Randall Price, Unholy War, America, Israel and Radical Islam, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 2002); Ray Comfort, Nostradamus, Attack on America and More Incredible Prophecies, (South

claims, 'Islam considers it a sacred mission of religious honor to recapture Old Jerusalem.'¹³²⁸ His books are replete with similarly dogmatic and stereotyped assertions:

'All Moslems see Israel as their enemy.'¹³²⁹

'The Arab nations are united in their fanatical obsession to destroy Israel.'¹³³⁰

'Agreements in the Arab nations don't mean the same thing they mean in the Judeo-Christian world. Islam not only has a track record of re-interpreting, denouncing and reversing settlements, such actions are actually encouraged if they further the cause of Allah.'¹³³¹

'This movement seeks not only to destroy the State of Israel but also the overthrow of the Judeo-Christian culture - the very foundation of our western civilisation ... They have, like the Communists, at their philosophic core the sworn duty to "bury us."¹³³²

van der Hoeven believes, 'It is not just a question of "their land" being taken; it has far deeper origins, one of the principal ones being the influence and ideology of Islam ... aiming for the universally declared Muslim goal - that Palestine as a country will revert to Islamic rule and sovereignty.'¹³³³ Other Christian Zionist authors have made similar claims.¹³³⁴

Such views have recently been described as 'new McCarthyite'.¹³³⁵ In February 2002, for example, Pat Robertson caused considerable controversy when he too described Islam as a violent religion bent on world domination. He also claimed American Muslims were forming terrorist cells in order to destroy the country. Robertson made the allegations on his Christian Broadcasting Network '700 Club.' After clips showing Muslims in America, the announcer, Lee Webb asked Robertson, 'As for the Muslim immigrants Pat, it

Plainfield, New Jersey, Bridge Logos, 2002).

¹³²⁸ Lindsey, Israel, op.cit., pp38-39.

¹³²⁹ Lindsey, 1980's, op.cit., p45.

¹³³⁰ Lindsey, Israel, op.cit., p33.

¹³³¹ Lindsey, Planet, op.cit., p256.

¹³³² Lindsey, Final, op.cit., pp4-5.

¹³³³ van der Hoeven, Babylon, op.cit., pp132-133.

¹³³⁴ See Mark Hitchcock, The Coming Islamic Invasion of Israel, (Portland Oregon, Multnomah, 2002) and Randall Price, Unholy War, America, Israel and Radical Islam, (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 2002).

¹³³⁵ A term coined by William Safire, a former Nixon speechwriter and conservative Republican who thought George Bush Snr. was insufficiently pro-Israel. Cited in Lind, op.cit.

makes you wonder, if they have such contempt for our foreign policy why they'd even want to live here?' Robertson replied:

'Well, as missionaries possibly to spread the doctrine of Islam ... I have taken issue with our esteemed President in regard to his stand in saying Islam is a peaceful religion. It's just not. And the Koran makes it very clear, if you see an infidel, you are to kill him ... the fact is our immigration policies are now so skewed to the Middle East and away from Europe that we have introduced these people into our midst and undoubtedly there are terrorist cells all over them.'¹³³⁶

At the 2002 Southern Baptist Convention¹³³⁷ held in Florida, the former national convention leader, the Rev. Jerry Vines, pastor of the 25,000 member First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, brought applause from several thousand participants of the pastors' conference when he described Muhammad as 'a demon-possessed paedophile'¹³³⁸

Such antipathy toward Arabs, denigration of Palestinians and hatred of Islam invariably leads Christian Zionists to also oppose any peaceful resolution of the Arab Israeli conflict which might require or coerce Israel to relinquish territory or compromise its security.

6.5 Opposing the Peace Process

While Christian Zionists invariably recognise Israel's unilateral claim to the Occupied Territories, they also oppose Palestinian aspirations to self determination since the two are intrinsically incompatible. David Pileggi, for example, observes, 'Despite their widespread PR successes, the Palestinians have failed to convince most Israelis and Diaspora Jews that they have given up their dream of dismantling Israel in favour of a State in the West Bank and Gaza Strip ... Palestinians cannot be trusted with a State at the heart of Israel.'¹³³⁹ Walter Riggans also criticises the Oslo and Wye Peace Accords because they threaten to legitimise Palestinian claims to Jerusalem and the

¹³³⁶ Alan Cooperman, 'Robertson Calls Islam a Religion of Violence, Mayhem.' Washington Post, 22 February (2002), pAO2.

¹³³⁷ The Southern Baptist Convention is a coalition of 42,000 churches with 16 million members. Since the 1980s it has become increasingly fundamentalist. See <http://www.sbcannualmeeting.org/sbc02/>

¹³³⁸ Richard Vara, 'Texas secession rumor, attacks on Islam mark Baptist meeting', Houston Chronicle, 10 June (2002); Alan Cooperman, 'Anti-Muslim Remarks Stir Tempest', Washington Post 19 June (2002). According to Cooperman, the newly elected president of the Southern Baptists, the Rev. Jack Graham defended Vine's speech as 'accurate'.

West Bank. Identifying with Israelis he claims, 'Many Jewish people are quite devastated, and feel they have been betrayed into the hands of cunning and ruthless Palestinians who are exploiting the accords as a first step towards the elimination of Israel.' Indeed, Riggans claims that the peace accords have been a betrayal of God's intentions for the Jewish people. 'The peace ... is a false one and there are those who believe its roots are from the evil one.'¹³⁴⁰ Clarence Wagner of BFP shares this perspective. He is equally dismissive of the peace negotiations:

'We need to encourage others to understand God's plans, not the man-inspired plans of the UN, the US, the EEC, Oslo, Wye, etc. God is not in any plan that would wrestle the Old City of Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount area and the Mount of Olives, and give it to the Moslem world. Messiah is not coming back to a Moslem city called Al-Quds, but to the regathered, restored Jewish city of Jerusalem.'¹³⁴¹

The biblical literalism of Christian Zionism leads many to demonise Arabs and Palestinians as satanic enemies of the Jewish people; their futurist reading of prophecy demands that much of the Middle East belongs to the Jewish people; and their eschatology predicts a pessimistic and apocalyptic end to the world. Peace talks are therefore not only a waste of time, they demonstrate at best a lack of faith and at worst a rebellious defiance toward God's plans. Such infallible certitudes lead some Christian Zionists to anathematise those who do not share their presuppositions.

6.6 Forcing God's Hand

Christian Zionists often attempt to silence critics with the threat of divine retribution. For example, Brickner warns other evangelicals who do not share a Zionist perspective that they are fighting against God.

'Peril awaits those who presume to say that God is finished with His chosen people ... Just as God judged the nation of Egypt for her ill treatment of His people, so will He judge nations today. Evangelicals who would understand the Middle East must pay close attention to the teaching of Scripture, and take note of the cosmic forces that now do

¹³³⁹ David Pileggi, 'Letter from Jersualem', Shalom, July (1991).

¹³⁴⁰ Walter Riggans, 'The Messianic Community and the Hand Shake' Shalom, 1, (1995), including a quote from Benjamin Berger, elder at Kehilat HaMashiach, Jerusalem.

¹³⁴¹ Wagner, 'Driving', op.cit., p9.

battle in the heavens but will soon do battle on earth. They must choose carefully which side to uphold.'¹³⁴²

Christians are left in no doubt which side to 'uphold.' On the 1st January 2002 edition of the CBN 700 Club, Pat Robertson warned that if the US 'wants to interfere with Bible prophecy and wants to move in and wrest East Jerusalem away from the Jews and give it to Yasser Arafat ... heaven help this nation of ours ... If the United States takes East Jerusalem back and makes it the capital of the Palestinian State, then we are asking for the wrath of God.'¹³⁴³ Robertson even suggests that Rabin's assassination was an act of God, a judgement for his betrayal of his own people: 'This is God's land and God has strong words about someone who parts and divides His land. The rabbis put a curse on Yitzhak Rabin when he began cutting up the land.'¹³⁴⁴

Such pronouncements coming from highly influential Christian leaders appear little different from those of Muslim fundamentalists who call for a 'holy war' against the West. Dave MacPherson has noted that the danger of such Armageddon theology is not so much that it is fatalistic, but that it is so contagious.¹³⁴⁵ Karen Armstrong is not alone in tracing within Western Christian Zionism evidence of the legacy of the Crusades. Such fundamentalists have, she claims, 'returned to a classical and extreme religious crusading.'¹³⁴⁶

Christian Zionists recognise that since 1948 Israel's most strategic ally has been the United States, in vetoing censure at the United Nations; guaranteeing loans to fund the settlements; providing the latest military hardware to maintain their military occupation of the West Bank; taking Israel's side in negotiations with the Arab world and Palestinians; and most recently, recognising they share in a common war against global terrorism. Christian Zionists have therefore sanctified this relationship while demonising Arabs and Islam; they have defended Israel's right to live within secure and

¹³⁴² Brickner, Don't, op.cit.

¹³⁴³ Howard Mortman, 'Don't ignore Pat Robertson', The Frontline, 7 January (2002). <http://www.hotlinescoop.com/web/content/columns/extrememortman/020107.htm>

¹³⁴⁴ Pat Robertson, 'Pat answers your questions on Israel,' 700 Club, Christian Broadcasting Network, <http://cbn.org/700club>

¹³⁴⁵ Dave MacPherson, cited in Halsell, Forcing, op.cit., p10.

¹³⁴⁶ Karen Armstrong, Holy War, The Crusades and Their Impact on Today's World, (London, Macmillan, 1988), p377.

expanded borders while encouraging the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from their land; and have opposed the peace process where it threatens to partition Jerusalem or Eretz Israel. The implacable conviction that God has mandated in scripture exclusive and sovereign Jewish rule over Eretz Israel, the entire city of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, leads Christian Zionist leaders to invoke God's wrath on those who oppose them, even fellow evangelicals.

7. The Political Implications of Christian Zionism: Conclusions

This chapter has argued that Christian Zionism as a movement has profound and lasting political consequences. Christian Zionists have shown varying degrees of enthusiasm for implementing six basic theological convictions that arise from their literal and futurist reading of the Bible:

1. The belief that the Jews remain God's chosen people leads Christian Zionists to seek to bless Israel in material ways. However, this also invariably results in the uncritical endorsement of and justification for Israel's racist and apartheid policies, in the media, among politicians and through solidarity tours to Israel.
2. As God's chosen people, the final restoration of the Jews to Israel is therefore actively encouraged and facilitated through partnerships between Christian organisations and the Jewish Agency.
3. Eretz Israel, as delineated in scripture, belongs exclusively to the Jewish people, therefore the land must be annexed and the settlements adopted and strengthened.
4. Jerusalem is regarded as the eternal and exclusive capital of the Jews, and cannot be shared with the Palestinians. Therefore, strategically, Western governments are placed under pressure by Christian Zionists to relocate their embassies to Jerusalem and thereby recognise the fact.
5. The Third Temple has yet to be built, the priesthood consecrated and sacrifices reinstituted. As dispensational Christian Zionists, in particular, believe this is prophesied, they offer varying degrees of support to the Jewish Temple Mount organisations committed to achieving it.

6. Since Christian Zionists are convinced there will be an apocalyptic war between good and evil in the near future, there is no prospect for lasting peace between Jews and Arabs. Indeed, to advocate Israel compromise with Islam or coexist with Palestinians is to identify with those destined to oppose God and Israel in the imminent battle of Armageddon.

Clearly, not all Christian Zionists embrace each of these six tenets, or with the same degree of conviction or involvement. Nevertheless, as has been argued, the overall consequences of such uncritical support for the State of Israel, especially among American Evangelicals who identify with Christian Zionism in larger numbers than in Britain, is inherently and pathologically destructive.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

This thesis has examined the main factors which have contributed to the emergence and development of evangelical Christian Zionism from 1800 through an appraisal of its historical roots, theological basis and political consequences and activities. It has been demonstrated that Christian Zionism is both an influential as well as controversial movement.

This conclusion will summarise the main factors in the development of Christian Zionism; it will distinguish between its variant forms; delineate between its constructive and destructive aspects; offer a critical summary; and make proposals for an alternative.

1. Observations on the Development of Christian Zionism

Seven observations can be made concerning the development and contemporary significance of this movement:

1. Christian Zionism, through its active and public support for Jewish restoration to Palestine, predated the rise of Jewish Zionism by at least 60 years.
2. Its origins lie within 19th Century British premillennial sectarianism, however, by the early 20th Century it had become a predominantly American dispensational movement and pervasive within all main evangelical denominations.
3. While the strategic value of a Jewish homeland in Palestine was a significant factor in British foreign policy during the 19th Century, it had become a dominant feature of American foreign policy by the end of the 20th Century.
4. Without the initiative and commitment of British clergy, politicians and statesman during the 19th Century it is questionable whether the Jewish Zionist dream of a national homeland in Palestine would have been realised.
5. Without the sustained political support of Christian Zionists in America, and significant government funding, it is doubtful whether the State of Israel would have remained in existence since 1948, let alone

continued to occupy and settle the West Bank since 1967.

6. Conservative estimates would suggest that the Christian Zionist movement is at least ten times larger than the Jewish Zionist movement and has become the dominant lobby within contemporary American politics.
7. Underpinning Christian Zionism is a novel theological system based on an ultra-literal and futurist reading of the Bible which, while its origins are rooted in the Reformation and Puritanism, is essentially the product of early 19th Century millennialist sectarianism.

2. Variant Forms of Christian Zionism

Four distinct strands of contemporary evangelical Christian Zionism emerge based on their theological understanding of the relationship between the Church and Israel; their approach toward evangelism; Restorationism; Eretz Israel and the settlements; Jerusalem; the Temple; and Armageddon. These are: Covenantal Premillennialism; Messianic Dispensationalism; Apocalyptic Dispensationalism; and Political Dispensationalism. The following chart summarises their unique characteristics.

Doctrine	Covenantal Premillennialism	Messianic Dispensationalism	Apocalyptic Dispensationalism	Political Dispensationalism
Relationship to Church	Part	Separate	Separate	Separate
Evangelism	Essential	Essential	Optional	Unnecessary
Restorationism	Prophesied	Prophesied	Prophesied	Implemented
Eretz Israel and settlements	Negotiable	Millennium	Non-negotiable	Solidarity
Jerusalem exclusive capital	Negotiable	Millennium	Non-negotiable	Lobbying for
Temple rebuilt	Irrelevant	Millennium	Imminent	Irrelevant
Armageddon	Optional	Inevitable	Inevitable	Repudiated
Representatives	Higton & Riggans	Rosen, Brickner Fruchtenbaum	Lindsey, Evans & LaHaye	Robertson & Falwell
Organisations	CMJ & CWI	JFJ & AMFI	DTS	ICEJ & BFP

Figure 9: A taxonomy of the variant types of Christian Zionism¹³⁴⁷

Covenantal Premillennialism and Messianic Dispensationalism share a common commitment to evangelise Jewish people before the Second Advent. Messianic Dispensationalism, by virtue of its two covenant theology, is also committed to reviving Jewish worship including Temple practices. It shares with Apocalyptic Dispensationalism a strong emphasis on End Times prophecy as well as a pessimism regarding peace in the Middle East. Apocalyptic Dispensationalism also shares with Political Dispensationalism a commitment to maintaining strong US military and political ties with Israel. Political Dispensationalism may be distinguished by its disavowal of evangelism, its optimistic eschatology and reinterpretation of the Christian

¹³⁴⁷ It is recognised that these variant forms of Christian Zionism are not entirely discreet and that there is a degree of overlap, especially in their theological perspectives. Furthermore, some Christian Zionist agencies are circumspect in their official doctrinal statements on controversial subjects such as the settlements or Temple. This thesis has therefore relied on the published views of leaders and representatives of these agencies,

gospel. For Political Dispensationalism the purpose of the Church is to support and bless Israel since the Jews are accepted by God on the basis of their own covenant and will recognise their Messiah when he returns. If Covenantal Premillennialism may be regarded as the most orthodox and benign form of Christian Zionism, Political Dispensationalism appears to be the most problematic. The following chart summarises the distinctive elements of each.

Type of Christian Zionism	Distinctive Elements
1. Covenantal Premillennial	Evangelism and Restorationism
2. Messianic Dispensational	Evangelism and the Jewish Temple
3. Apocalyptic Dispensational	Prophecy and Armageddon
4. Political Dispensational	Defending and Blessing Israel

Figure 10: A summary of the variant types of Christian Zionism

3. The Constructive and Destructive Aspects of Christian Zionism

A balanced and objective assessment of Christian Zionism is difficult given that its supporters and critics use strong and emotive language to defend or condemn it. At the same time opinions as to the causes and solutions to the Middle East crisis are deeply polarised. It is possible, nevertheless, to summarise the constructive and destructive features of Christian Zionism and assess in what ways it may be regarded as a blessing or a curse on the Jewish people. The following chart summarises the constructive and destructive aspects of Christian Zionism which this thesis has highlighted.

recognising that their views remain their own and do not necessarily reflect those of their organisation as a whole.

Constructive	Destructive
1. Encouragement of dialogue between Jews and Christians	1. Justification of apartheid within an exclusive Jewish State
2. Commitment to share the gospel with Jewish people (except Political Dispensationalism)	2. Undermining Christian witness in the Middle East by partisan support for Israel
3. Stand against anti-Semitism	3. Encouragement of religious intolerance and Islamaphobia
4. Education of the Gentile Church in the Jewish origins of the Christian faith	4. Tacit acceptance of the ethnic-cleansing of Palestinians by their support for the Jewish Settlements
5. Compassion for and humanitarian work among Jewish refugees	5. Denigration of moderate Jews willing to negotiate a land for peace deal
	6. Incitement of religious fanaticism by supporting the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple on Haram Al-Sharif
	7. Apocalyptic eschatology in danger of becoming a self fulfilling prophecy.

*Figure 11: The constructive and destructive consequences of Christian Zionism*¹³⁴⁸

It may be observed that none of the constructive aspects are necessarily intrinsic or exclusive to Christian Zionism but are shared by other philo-Semitic evangelical agencies which work among Jewish people and yet do not support Zionism.¹³⁴⁹

4. A Critical Assessment of Christian Zionism

The fundamental question Christian Zionists must answer is this: what difference did the coming of the kingdom of God in the person of Jesus Christ make to the traditional Jewish hopes and expectations concerning the land and people?¹³⁵⁰ Clarence Bass crystallises the issue with a series of more

¹³⁴⁸ Stephen Sizer, 'Christian Zionism, True Friends of Israel?' *Evangelicals Now*, December (2000), p14; 'Justifying Apartheid in the Name of God', *Churchman*, Summer (2001), pp147-171.

¹³⁴⁹ Based on interviews with representatives. These agencies would include InterVarsity Fellowship, the YMCA, World Vision, and Youth for Christ.

¹³⁵⁰ Colin Chapman, 'Ten questions for a theology of the land' in *The Land of Promise*, edited by Philip Johnston and Peter Walker, (Downers Grove, Illinois, InterVarsity Press,

specific rhetorical questions:

'It is legitimate to ask whether Dispensationalism is not orientated more from the Abrahamic Covenant than from the Cross. Is not its focus centred more on the Jewish kingdom than on the Body of Christ? Does it not interpret the New Testament in the light of Old Testament prophecies, instead of interpreting those prophecies in the light of the more complete revelation of the New Testament?'¹³⁵¹

Christian Zionists appear to believe that the coming of Jesus Christ made little or no difference to the nationalistic and territorial aspirations of 1st Century Judaism. They seem to read the Old Testament in the same way that the first disciples did before Pentecost, believing the coming of the kingdom of Jesus meant a postponement of Jewish hopes for restoration rather than the fulfilment of those hopes in the Messiah and his new and inclusive messianic community.

As a result, the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), representing the indigenous and ancient Oriental and Eastern Churches, regard Christian Zionism as a deviant heresy. They assert, for instance, that Christian Zionists have aggressively imposed an aberrant expression of the Christian faith and an erroneous interpretation of the Bible which is subservient to the political agenda of the modern State of Israel. They claim the movement represents a tendency to:

'... force the Zionist model of theocratic and ethnocentric nationalism on the Middle East ... (rejecting) ... the movement of Christian unity and inter-religious understanding which is promoted by the (indigenous) churches in the region. The Christian Zionist programme, with its elevation of modern political Zionism, provides the Christian with a world view where the gospel is identified with the ideology of success and militarism. It places its emphasis on events leading up to the end of history rather than living Christ's love and justice today.'¹³⁵²

In its apocalyptic and political forms especially, Christian Zionism distorts the Bible and marginalises the universal imperative of the Christian message of equal grace and common justice. Kenneth Cragg summarises the implications of its intrinsic ethnic exclusivity:

2000), pp172-187.

¹³⁵¹ Clarence Bass, Backgrounds to Dispensationalism, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1960), p151.

¹³⁵² MECC, What is Western Fundamentalist Christian Zionism? (Limassol, Cyprus, Middle East Council of Churches, 1988), p13.

'It is so; God chose the Jews; the land is theirs by divine gift. These dicta cannot be questioned or resisted. They are final. Such verdicts come infallibly from Christian biblicists for whom Israel can do no wrong - thus fortified. But can such positivism, this unquestioning finality, be compatible with the integrity of the Prophets themselves? It certainly cannot square with the open peoplehood under God which is the crux of New Testament faith. Nor can it well be reconciled with the ethical demands central to law and election alike.'¹³⁵³

Such literalist assumptions preclude any possibility of an alternative reading of the Bible, history or a just and lasting outcome to the Middle East peace negotiations. Instead, Christian Zionism shows an uncritical tolerance of Rabbinic Judaism and an endorsement of the Israeli political Right. At the same time it demonstrates an inexcusable lack of compassion for the Palestinian tragedy and the plight of the indigenous Christian community. In doing so, whether intentionally or otherwise, it has legitimised their oppression in the name of the Gospel while committing the Jewish people themselves to an apocalyptic future far more horrifying than even the Shoah.

Christian Zionism only thrives on a literal and futurist hermeneutic in which ancient Old Testament promises of blessing to the Jewish people are applied to the contemporary State of Israel. To do so it is necessary to ignore or marginalise the New Testament which reinterprets, annuls, fulfils and expands these promises in and through Jesus Christ. Palmer Robertson has summarised this progressive revelation of the purposes of God:

'In the process of redemptive history, a dramatic movement has been made from type to reality, from shadow to substance. The land which once was the specific locale of God's redemptive working served well within the old covenant as a picture of Paradise lost and promised. Now, however, in the era of new-covenant fulfilment, the land has been expanded to encompass the cosmos ... In this age of fulfilment, therefore, a retrogression to the limited forms of the old covenant must be neither expected or promoted. Reality must not give way to shadow.'¹³⁵⁴

The choice is ultimately therefore between two theologies: one based primarily on the shadows of the old covenant; the other on the reality of the

¹³⁵³ Kenneth Cragg, The Arab Christian A History in the Middle East. (London, Mowbray, 1992), p238.

¹³⁵⁴ O. Palmer Robertson, 'A new-covenant perspective on the land' in The Land of Promise, edited by Philip Johnston and Peter Walker (Downers Grove, Illinois, Apollos/InterVarsity Press, 2000), p140.

new covenant. In identifying with the former, Christian Zionism is an exclusive theology that focuses on the Jews in the Land rather than an inclusive theology that centres on Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. It consequently provides a theological endorsement for racial segregation, apartheid and war. This is diametrically opposed to the inclusive theology of justice, peace and reconciliation which lie at the heart of the new covenant.

To suggest, therefore, that the Jewish people continue to have a special relationship with God, apart from faith in Jesus, or have exclusive rights to land, a city and temple is, in the words of John Stott, 'biblical anathema'.¹³⁵⁵ Paul's warning to the Church in Galatia concerning the nationalistic and legalistic Christian Judaizers infecting the church of his own day is perhaps an appropriate description of and response to contemporary Christian Zionism: 'Get rid of the slave woman and her son' (Galatians 4:30).

5. Biblical Zionism: An Alternative?

This research has sought to reject both anti-Semitism as well as nationalistic Zionism. The choice does not have to be between Christian Zionism and Replacement Theology, the idea that the spiritual Church, as the 'new Israel', has in some sense replaced physical Israel within God's purposes.

Covenantalism recognizes instead that, based on passages such as Romans 9-11, for example, the Jewish people are loved by God, have fulfilled a unique role in history leading to the birth of Christianity, and hope that one day many will come to recognise Jesus as their Messiah.

It affirms that the Church is Israel renewed and restored in Christ and enlarged to now embrace people of all nations. It also believes that Jews and Palestinians, like all other races, have the right to self determination and to live within secure and internationally recognised borders.

Following Colin Chapman, it is contended that a form of Biblical Zionism which accepts the existence of the State of Israel, can work and pray for the peace and security of the Jewish people on political and humanitarian

¹³⁵⁵ John Stott, cited in Don Wagner, *Anxious for Armageddon*, (Scottsdale, Herald Press, 1995), p80.

grounds without needing to justify or sacralise the State of Israel through biblical or theological arguments.¹³⁵⁶

It is hoped that this thesis will stimulate further research and debate by assisting in the delineation of the variant forms of Christian Zionism, their origins, basis and consequences. With the repudiation of the destructive elements of Christian Zionism, Jews and Arabs, like Isaac's children, Jacob and Esau, might be encouraged to stop fighting over the birthright and start sharing the blessings.¹³⁵⁷

Garth Hewitt, a peacemaker and friend of all three faith communities, has expressed the hope of this author, in a song based on words taken from the Jewish Talmud, 'Ten Measures of Beauty'.¹³⁵⁸ The words are offered as a valedictory prayer.

'May the justice of God fall down like fire
and bring a home for the Palestinian.
May the mercy of God pour down like rain
and protect the Jewish people.
And may the beautiful eyes of a Holy God
Who weeps for his children
Bring the healing hope for his wounded ones
For the Jew and the Palestinian.'¹³⁵⁹

¹³⁵⁶ Colin Chapman, Whose Promised Land? (Oxford, Lion, 2002), p.274.

¹³⁵⁷ Yeheskel Landau, an illustration given in an unpublished talk at St George's Cathedral, Jerusalem, December (1998).

¹³⁵⁸ Talmud, Kiddushin 49b.

¹³⁵⁹ Garth Hewitt, 'Ten Measures of Beauty' Journeys with Garth Hewitt, The Holy Land, CD (Nelson Word, 1996).

Glossary

Aliyah A Hebrew word meaning 'going up' used in a general sense to describe going up to Jerusalem on pilgrimage. In the context of Zionism it refers to the ingathering of the Jewish people returning to their homeland.

Amillennialism There will be no literal or physical kingdom on earth when Christ returns. The kingdom of God is present in the world now as Christ rules the Church through his Word and the Spirit. Revelation 20 is metaphorical.

Antichrist A human or supernatural figure who opposes God and the Church and will reign on earth prior to his defeat at Christ's return. Usually associated with Premillennialism.

Apartheid A Dutch Afrikaans word derived from the root 'apart' meaning 'separate' and 'heid' meaning 'hood'. It describes the legal and institutional segregation of people on the basis of their race or colour.

Apocalyptic Derived from Revelation 1:1 and meaning 'unveiling', it refers to biblical or extra-biblical literature which reveals the mystery of God's end time purposes prior to the return of Jesus Christ.

Apostasy A deliberate falling away or repudiation of the Christian faith by professing Christians. One of the predicted signs of the times indicating the imminent return of Christ.

Armageddon From the Hebrew for 'Mountain of Megiddo' it is mentioned in Revelation 16:16 as the place where the final battle on earth will take place. Others understand it as a symbol of the final overthrow of evil by God.

Chiliasm From the Greek 'chilias' meaning 'a thousand', it is a synonym for millennialism. It is used as a general term to describe either the literal 1000 year Kingdom of Premillennialism or the extensive era of Postmillennialism.

Classical Dispensationalism The original dispensational position of Scofield and Chafer. God has two peoples, eternally separate: an earthly people, the Jews and a heavenly people, the Church. Two ways to salvation, law & grace.

Covenant A solemn and binding commitment between God and his people. Based on Jer. 31 and the NT, the 'new' covenant is a synonym for God's grace revealed in the redemption of Christ resulting in a Church of Jews and Gentiles.

Covenantal Premillennialism A literal 1000 year kingdom on earth following the sudden return of Christ. The Jewish people will have a place of prominence but as part of the universal Church. Synonymous with Historic Premillennialism.

Dispensationalism Seven periods of time during which humanity has or will be tested according to some specific revelation of God. Israel and the Church are separate. The Millennium will be the culmination of God's purposes for Israel.

End Times Synonymous with the 'Last Days' and used in Scripture to describe the period of history from the death of Christ to his return. More particularly used by premillennialists and dispensationalists to describe the present era.

Eretz Israel This is 'Greater' Israel as delineated in Genesis, the land God promised Abraham and his descendents on both sides of the River Jordan from the River of Egypt in the south to the Euphrates in the north.

Eschatology From the Greek 'eschatos' meaning 'last' and 'logos' meaning 'word'. The doctrine of the future and specifically the events preceding the return of Christ. Variants include Futurist, Idealist, Historicist and Realised.

Evangelicalism A movement within Protestant Christianity which emphasizes a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, a commitment to the Bible as the infallible word of God and the sharing of the gospel with unbelievers.

Fundamentalism The name derives from a series of pamphlets called 'the Fundamentals' published between 1910-1915. Fundamentalists not only believe the Bible is infallible (divine in source) but is also inerrant (without error).

Futurism Biblical prophecies, especially those relating to Israel, are interpreted as referring to still future events because they have not been fulfilled literally. These include, for example, the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple.

Hermeneutics The Greek word 'hermeneia' meaning 'interpretation' denotes the principles used in biblical interpretation. Historically these include allegorical (Roman Catholic), typological (Reformed) and literalist (Fundamentalist)

Historic Premillennialism A literal 1000 year kingdom on earth following the sudden return of Christ. The Jewish people will have a place of prominence but as part of the universal Church. Synonymous with Covenantal Premillennialism.

Historicism The Book of Revelation is interpreted by historicists as describing leaders, movements and major events in history from the birth of the Church until the return of Christ.

Hyper-Dispensationalism Hyper-Dispensationalism sees the Church Age commencing in Acts 13 when the Jewish people rejected the Gospel and Paul turns to the Gentiles, instead of in Acts 2 at Pentecost.

Idealism The symbolic interpretation of Revelation describing the conflict between good and evil through history. Unlike the preterist or historicist, the idealist does not link the interpretation to specific historic events.

Literalism The interpretation of scripture, especially prophecy, based upon the plain meaning of the words of the text. Usually distinguished from grammatical-historical interpretation, literalism is associated most frequently with futurism.

Messianic Dispensationalism A movement of Jews who believe Jesus to be their Messiah. Invariably dispensational, evangelistic and pro-Zionist, they are convinced the Temple will be rebuilt and Jewish worship reinstituted.

Mid-Tribulationism The Church will be secretly raptured to heaven half way through the seven year Tribulation on earth when unbelievers and the Jews will suffer and have to endure the Battle of Armageddon before Christ returns visibly

Millennium A 1000 year reign on earth based on Revelation 20 when Satan is bound and Christ reigns on earth. Usually associated with Covenantal Premillennialism, Dispensational Premillennialism or Postmillennialism.

Neo-Dispensationalism Israel and the Church, although separate people of God, will be united in the millennium. There is only one covenant and one way to God, through faith in Jesus Christ. Espoused by Ryrie and Walvoord.

Postmillennialism An extended period of peace and prosperity on earth prior to the return of Christ. The gospel will be proclaimed to all nations and Christian values will be universally embraced. Revelation 20 is symbolic

Post-Tribulationism The Church will be secretly raptured to heaven after the seven year Tribulation begins on earth during which they will suffer persecution and the Battle of Armageddon before Christ returns visibly to rescue his elect.

Premillennialism A literal 1000 year kingdom on earth following the sudden return of Christ. There are two variants, Covenantal and Dispensational depending on whether Israel and the Church will share eternity together.

Preterism The events prophesied by Jesus prior to his death and the Book of Revelation either occurred by 70 AD when Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed or by the fall of the Roman Empire in the fifth century AD.

Pre-Tribulationism The Church will be secretly raptured to heaven before the seven year Tribulation begins on earth when unbelievers and the Jews will suffer persecution and the Battle of Armageddon before Christ returns visibly.

Progressive Dispensationalism The Church is not a parenthesis but foretaste of God's kingdom. God has one purpose for Israel and the Church although OT prophecies regarding Israel will still be fulfilled in the Millennium by ethnic Jews.

Rapture Covenantalism teaches believers will be united with Christ when he returns. Dispensationalists divide the event into two parts. A secret rapture will remove believers during the Tribulation after which they will appear with Christ.

Replacement Theology A term often used by Christian Zionists to caricature Covenantalists as affirming that the spiritual Church, as the 'new Israel', has replaced physical Israel within God's purposes.

Restorationism The conviction that the Bible predicts and mandates a final and complete restoration of the Jewish people to Israel. This Christian movement preceded the rise of Jewish Zionism and facilitates Jews to make aliyah.

Signs of the Times These are specific signs which Jesus predicted would occur before his return. These include an increase in apostasy, wars, famines, earthquakes as well as a marked increase in Jewish people believing in Jesus.

Tribulation A period of seven years of suffering on earth immediately prior to the return of Christ popular within Dispensationalism especially. There are three variants depending on when the Church is raptured – pre, mid or post.

Typology A method of interpretation in which Old Testament 'types' are seen as fulfilled in the New Testament. These include people (David), places (Zion) and events (Passover) which are prefigurements or shadows of NT realities.

Ultra-Dispensationalism Also known as Bullingerism after E.W. Bullinger. The Church Age begins in Acts 28. Therefore only a few of the Pauline epistles are for the Church. The rest of the New Testament is for the Jewish Dispensation.

Zion The land of Israel or more specifically Jerusalem. At the heart of the Zionist dream where land, city and temple are once more restored to the Jewish people, either inaugurated by the Messiah or brought about by human effort.

Zionism The national movement for the return of the Jewish people to their ancient homeland and the resumption of Jewish political sovereignty in the land of Israel centred on Jerusalem as their eternal and undivided capital.

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